

LEGACY OF KAIN

SOUL REAVER



THE
DEAD
SHALL RISE



LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER - THE DEAD SHALL RISE
STANDARD EDITION

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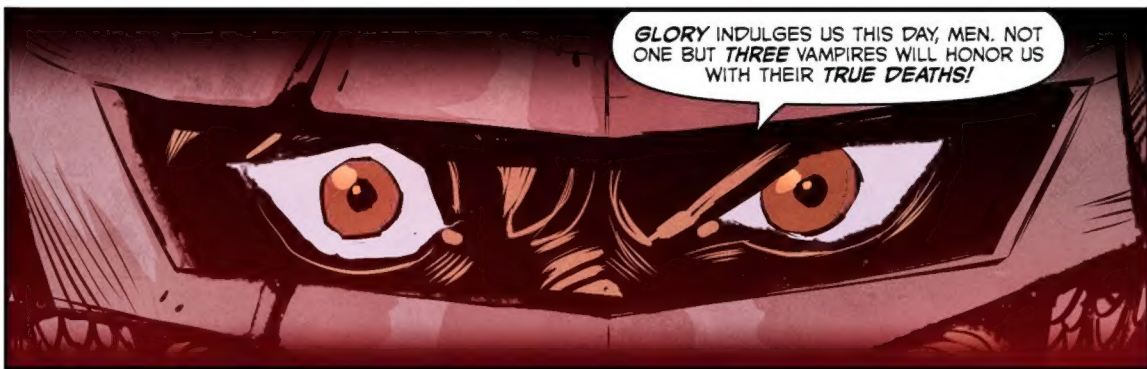
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THE DEAD SHALL RISE

CRYSTAL
DYNAMICS

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LATER...

WITHIN THE SHADOWED HALLS OF MY CLAN'S KEEP, BLOODIED AND VICTORIOUS, MY BROTHERS AND I SHARED A RARE MOMENT OF CAMARADERIE.

WE WERE BOUND BY THE **BLOOD OF KAIN**, YET DIVIDED BY DISCORD. SUCH GATHERINGS WERE FLEETING AND FRAUGHT, A STARK REMINDER OF THE FRAYED THREADS THAT WOVE US TOGETHER.

THE HUNTERS GROW **EMBOLDENED**, CONVINCED THEY CAN CHALLENGE OUR MASTERY OVER THIS WORLD.

THEY MIGHT HAVE KILLED YOU, RAZIEL, HAD TUREL AND I NOT INTERVENED.

RAZIEL DISPATCHED TWO OF THE WRETCHES WITH EASE. IT WAS YOU, **DUMAH**, WHO NEEDED RESCUING. BY MY HAND!

I WOULD HAVE SLAIN THEM ALL MYSELF.

WHY DID YOU COME, BROTHERS?

THE SCENT OF **BLOODSHED**... I COULD NOT RESIST ITS ALLURE.

FOR THREE NIGHTS WE TRACKED THEM. WE SOUGHT THEIR LAIR, THEIR PLANS, THEIR TRUE STRENGTH.

WE SUSPECT THEY BELONG TO A GROWING RABBLE STIRRING UNREST IN THE SOUTH-LANDS.

AND YOU SOUGHT TO LAY THIS REVELATION AT KAIN'S FEET. TO EARN HIS **FAVOR**, TO BASK IN HIS PRAISE.

KAIN'S FAVOR HAS GROWN **RARE**.

INDEED IT HAS.

THE HUNTERS LIE DEAD. THEIR TRAIL HAS GONE COLD.

A TRIVIAL MATTER. WE WILL **FEAST** UPON THEIR FELLOWS SOON ENOUGH.

TO DEAD HUNTERS!

GULP

GULP



THUD
THUD
THUD

HOW DID I NOT
SENSE A VISITOR'S
APPROACH?



AH!
THE SCENT
RETURNS... THE
MUSK OF BLOOD
YEARNING TO
BE SPILLED.



SNKKT



CREEEAK



GREETINGS,
RAZIEL.



A VAMPIRE,
BEARING A REGAL
GROWTH UPON
HER BROW? YET
HERS WAS UNLIKE
KAIN'S. SHE BORE
NO MARK OF MY
MASTER'S
PROGENY.

IDENTIFY
YOURSELF OR
PERISH.

I MUST
SPEAK TO YOU,
RAZIEL. IN
SECLUSION.



NAME
YOUR CLAN,
VAMPIRE!

STATE
YOUR PURPOSE
HERE.



WHO ARE
YOU?

INVITE ME
INSIDE AND
I SHALL
EXPLAIN...

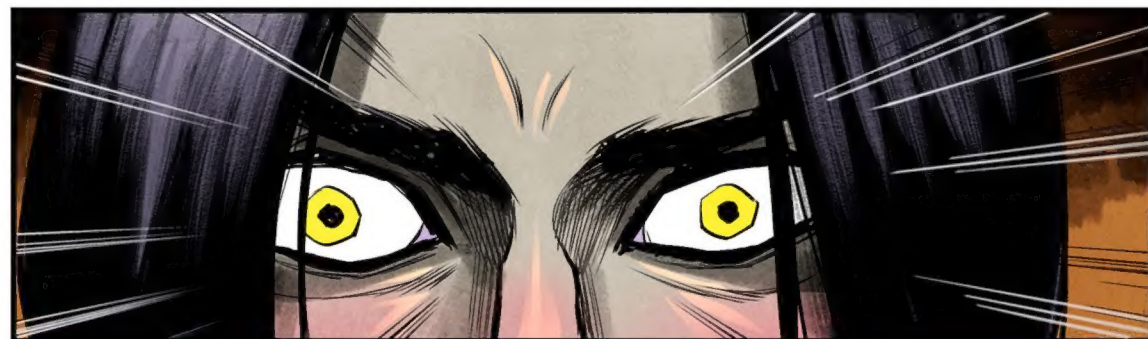


...BUT
TO YOU
ALONE.



YOU **DARE** ATTEMPT TO BARTER YOUR WAY
ACROSS MY THRESHOLD? I TRADE FREELY
NEITHER MY TIME NOR MY HOSPITALITY.

YOUR MAKER
SHOULD HAVE INSTILLED
IN YOU SOME SEMBLANCE
OF **MANNERS!**





LATER...

A VAMPIRE
WITH WINGS...

WHY DOES SHE SEEK THE HEART OF DARKNESS?

A PRIVILEGE
DENIED EVEN
TO KAIN.

WHAT DARK
FORCE SHAPED
HER MAJESTY?

HOW AM I BOUND TO THE FATE OF JANOS AUDRON?

WINGS...

CONCEITS OF
MYTH. OF
LEGEND.

OF MADNESS.

AS THE AMULET'S EYE OPENED, IT DREW ME INTO A VISION... AN ECHO FROM A PAST THAT AT FIRST, I DID NOT RECOGNIZE. MEMORIES OF A LIFE ERASED WERE NOW LAID BARE BEFORE ME.

WAS THIS SOME ANCIENT SORCERY? A SPELL WOVEN INTO THE FABRIC OF MY BEING, PULLING AT THE THREADS OF A LIFE I HAD LONG FORGOTTEN? IT WAS AS IF THE AMULET HELD DOMINION OVER MY MIND.

As I stood caught in its thrall, I wondered... what other secrets did this cursed artifact hold?

**NOT SO FAST! I SHALL
RULE THIS WORLD AND ALL
WHO DWELL HERE!**

**MONSTER! I
BANISH YOU TO THE
SHADOWS!**

CAN I
PLAY?

THWACK



YOU'RE TOO LITTLE TO PLAY WITH SWORDS. YOU'LL GET **HURT**. MOTHER AND FATHER WOULD SCOLD ME IF--

LET LADY ELALETH TRY, RAZIEL.



SHE, TOO, MUST LEARN TO DEFEND HERSELF. WHAT IF VAMPIRES STRIKE HERE?

VAMPIRES WON'T ATTACK THORNLACH. WE'RE **FAR** FROM THEIR TERRITORIES. WHAT WOULD THEY WANT WITH OUR POOR VILLAGE?

MY FATHER SAYS THEY TOOK WOLLSTAHL LAST MOON. THIRD VILLAGE SINCE HARVEST, AND MORE LEFT DEAD THAN ALIVE.

HE'S STRUGGLING TO FORGE ENOUGH SWORDS AND DAGGERS. FEAR IS SPREADING ALONG THE VALLEY.



AN ANGEL!



THANK YOU, MATHIAS.



MY FATHER SAYS IF WE ARE ATTACKED, THE SARAFAN WILL PROTECT US. THE SARAFAN ARE MIGHTY AND HAVE SWORN TO PURGE NOSGOTH OF THE VAMPIRE SCOURGE.



MY FATHER SAYS THE SARAFAN ARE REDUCED AND BEGGARED. HE SAYS THAT WE'RE FAR FROM THEIR OUTPOST AND BEYOND THEIR CONCERN.

HE SAYS THAT WE CAN RELY ON **NO ONE** TO SAVE US BUT **OURSELVES**.



≡SIGH≡

FINE. BUT DON'T LET ELALETH HEAR ANY OF THAT. DON'T FRIGHTEN HER.

DO YOU WANT TO BE A **DEMON** LIKE RAZIEL OR AN **ANGEL** LIKE ME?



I WILL DEFEAT YOU, SISTER.

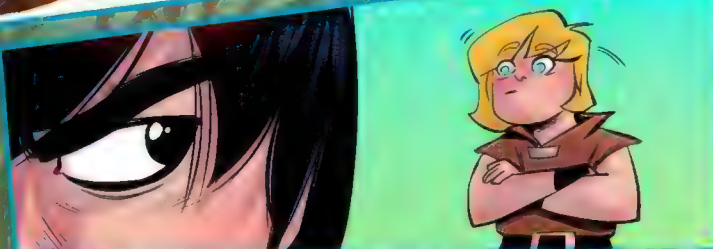
MONSTER! I BANISH YOU TO THE **DEMON REALM!**



AARRRGHH!



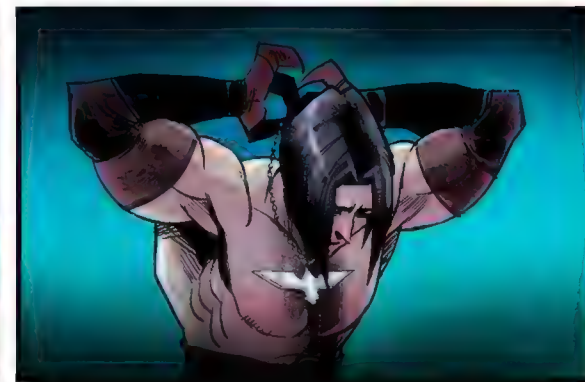
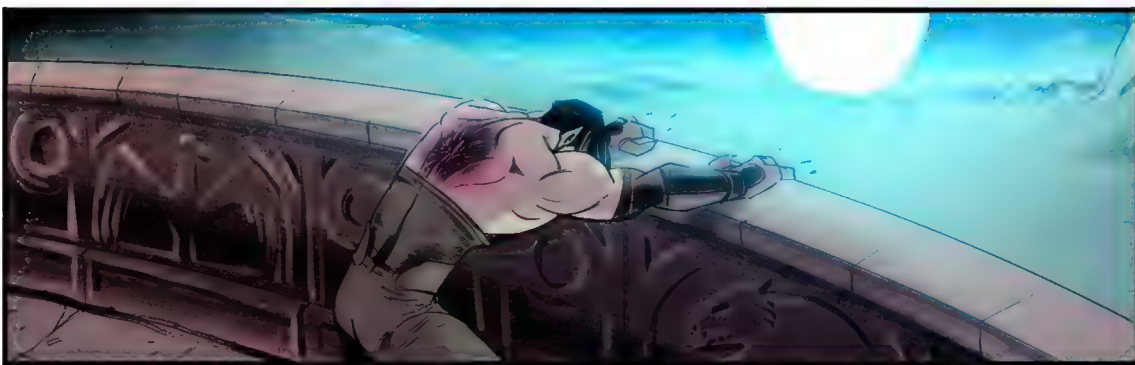
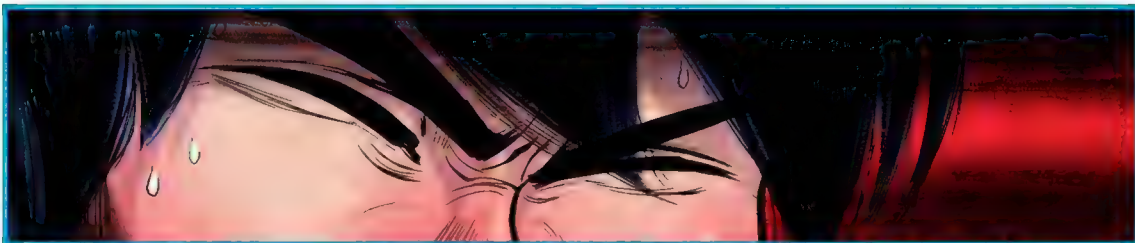
NOT SO FAST! I SHALL **RULE** THIS WORLD AND ALL WHO--

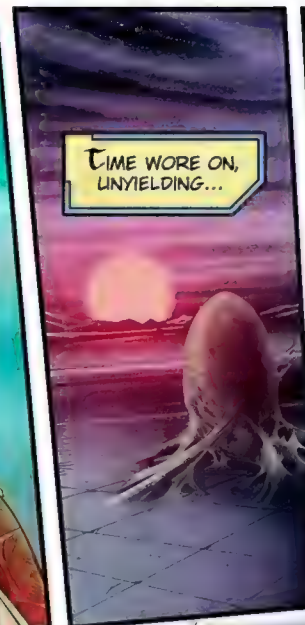
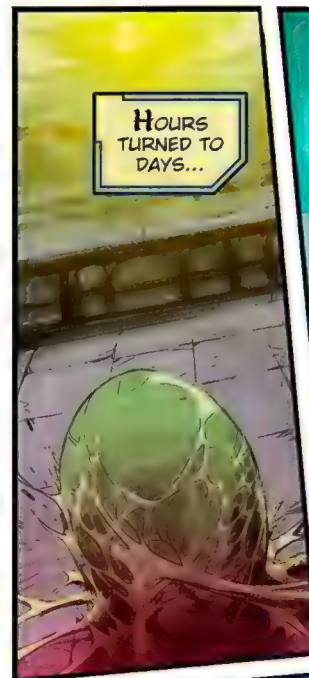


A SPECTER FROM THE ABYSS APPEARED, AN OMINOUS HARBINGER OF DESTINY. IT LOOMED OVER MY CHILDHOOD SELF, WHISPERING PROMISES OF A FUTURE LADEN WITH SIGNIFICANCE.

A BLADE OF TRUE POWER BECKONS TO YOU, CHILD. ONCE IT IS IN YOUR GRASP, FATE SHALL BE YOURS TO MOLD, AND NONE SHALL STAND AGAINST YOU.







LATER...

SOON AFTER I EMERGED, REBORN FOR THE SECOND TIME, I FOLLOWED THE TRACE ECHOES OF MY SISTER'S PRESENCE TO THIS DESOLATE PLACE.

MY SISTER. WHAT A BALM IT'D BE TO DISMISS THE WRETCHED AMULET'S REVELATIONS AS ILLUSION RATHER THAN A TRUE GLIMPSE OF...

...MY HUMAN PAST.

SHE IS NEAR. SHE HAS BEEN WAITING FOR ME.

GREETINGS, BROTHER.

DID YOU BRING THE HEART OF DARKNESS?

THE HEART IS A RELIC LOST TO TIME. WHY DO YOU BELIEVE I POSSESS IT?

I BELIEVE YOU CAN OBTAIN IT. I BELIEVE YOU WILL.

AFTER ALL, YOU OWE ME AT LEAST ONE KINDNESS.

I OWE YOU NOTHING.

YOU WILL REMEMBER SOON ENOUGH WHAT YOU DID TO EARN MY MALICE, AND YOU WILL ATONE.

SPEAK PLAINLY, SISTER.

DID YOU KNOW, RAZIEL, THAT IT WAS I WHO AIDED KAIN IN RESURRECTING YOU?

LIES! HOW COULD YOU HAVE ORCHESTRATED SUCH A THING?

THE AMULET WILL SHOW YOU SOON ENOUGH.

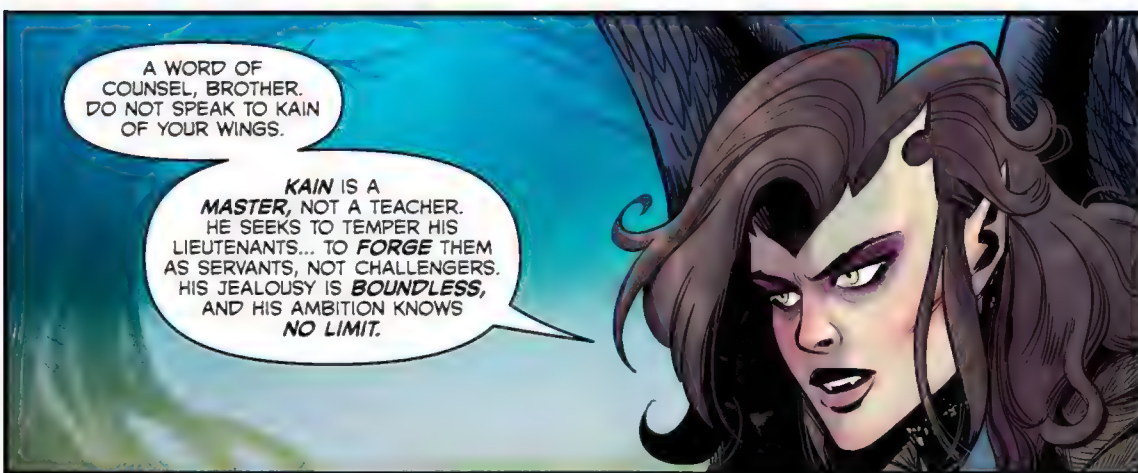
TELL ME, WHAT OTHER TRUTHS HAS IT REVEALED?

A BOY. MATHIAS.

SPEAK THAT NAME WITH GREATER CARE, BROTHER. WHAT ELSE DID YOU REMEMBER?

"WE WERE CHILDREN, PLAYING A HOLY WAR. WOODEN BLADES... ANGELS..."

"...AND DEMONS."



A WORD OF
COUNSEL, BROTHER.
DO NOT SPEAK TO KAIN
OF YOUR WINGS.

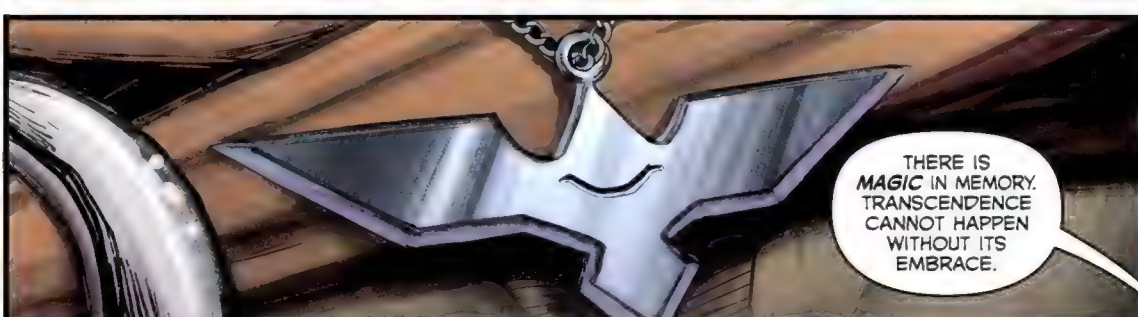
KAIN IS A
MASTER, NOT A TEACHER.
HE SEEKS TO TEMPER HIS
LIEUTENANTS... TO **FORGE** THEM
AS SERVANTS, NOT CHALLENGERS.
HIS JEALOUSY IS **BOUNDLESS**,
AND HIS AMBITION KNOWS
NO LIMIT.



DO NOT
FEIGN
SURPRISE.

I **KNEW** THAT YOU
WOULD TRANSCEND... AS
I HAVE TRANSCENDED.

THE AMULET
AND ITS MAGIC HAVE
ALWAYS BEEN **YOURS**. I
HAVE MERELY BEEN THEIR
KEEPER, THESE MANY
CENTURIES...



THERE IS
MAGIC IN MEMORY.
TRANSCENDENCE
CANNOT HAPPEN
WITHOUT ITS
EMBRACE.



DO YOU TRULY THINK I EMBRACE THE FRAILTY
AND FUTILITY OF MORTAL LIFE? I DESIRE ONLY
TO SERVE KAIN, **IN STRENGTH**, AS I HAVE
FOR A MILLENNIUM.

THE
DOOR TO YOUR
PAST HAS OPENED
AND CAN NEVER
BE CLOSED.

YOU
WILL RECALL
THE LOCATION
OF THE HEART
OF DARKNESS,
AND YOU WILL
DELIVER IT
TO ME.



SHINK

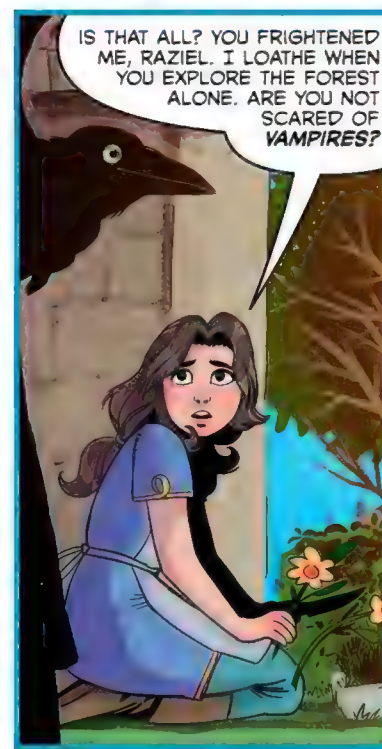
YOU
DO NOT
COMMAND
ME!

ANOTHER VISION BESIEGED ME.
MEMORIES MATERIALIZED AS
THOUGH FROM BEYOND A
MIST AT DAWN.



ELAETH!
HELP!

ITS WING IS
BROKEN!



IS THAT ALL? YOU FRIGHTENED
ME, RAZIEL. I LOATHE WHEN
YOU EXPLORE THE FOREST
ALONE. ARE YOU NOT
SCARED OF
VAMPIRES?



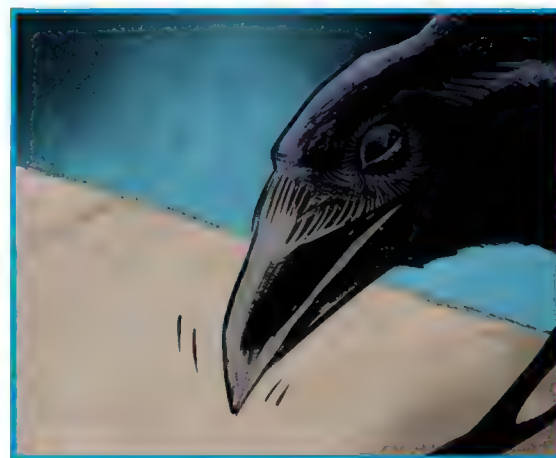
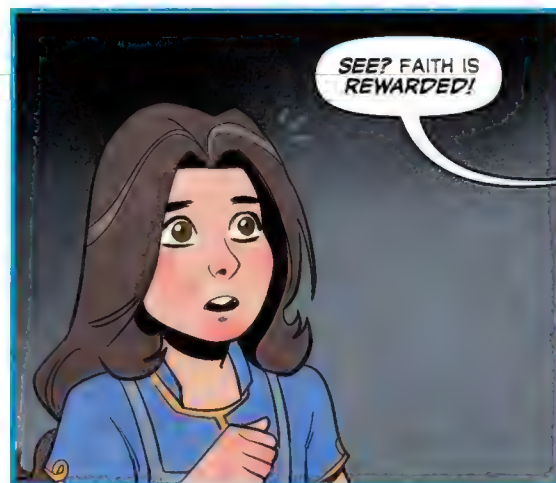
MORE THAN TWO
YEARS HAVE PASSED
SINCE THEY LAST
STALKED THIS VALLEY.
WE ARE SAFE...



...BUT I'LL
LUCK HAS
BEFALLEN
THIS POOR
CREATURE.



THERE IS
NOTHING TO
BE DONE,
RAZIEL. THIS
WILL BE A
KINDNESS...





YOU FOUND YOUR WAY TO ME TO DEMAND WHAT I **CANNOT** PROVIDE. WHY DO YOU SEEK THE HEART OF DARKNESS?

DO YOU BELIEVE IT WILL **RESTORE** YOUR HUMANITY?

HAHAHA

CONSULT THE AMULET. IT HAS BORNE WITNESS TO MY LIFE. IT UNDERSTANDS ME... PERHAPS **BETTER** THAN I UNDERSTAND MYSELF.

IT WILL HELP YOU APPREHEND YOURSELF AS WELL.

SOON ENOUGH, YOU WILL RECALL THE LOCATION OF THE HEART OF DARKNESS. SYMPATHY FOR ME WILL ACCOMPANY THE RECOLLECTION AND COMMIT YOU TO THE PROPER COURSE. ONLY **THEN** WILL OUR BUSINESS BE CONCLUDED.

LATER...

THE SANCTUARY OF THE CLANS.

I HEEDED MY SISTER'S COUNSEL, CONCEALING MY WINGS AND HIDING MY TRUE NATURE FROM KAIN.

ONE MUST GRANT MEN HAVE A GENIUS FOR DEVISING METHODS OF INFLICTING **PAIN** AND **SUFFERING** AND **DEATH**.

YOU SUMMONED ME, KAIN?

YOUR BROTHERS REPORT THAT THE HUNTERS IN THE SOUTHLANDS ARE JOINING FORCES. **PREPARING.**

IT IS OF **NO** CONSEQUENCE.

HUNTERS ARE EASILY DISPATCHED. SURELY TUREL AND D'UMAH INFORMED YOU OF HOW EFFORTLESSLY THE THREE OF US--

THE HUNTERS DO **NOT** CONCERN ME, RAZIEL!

WHAT CONCERNS ME IS THAT FOR A FORTNIGHT, **YOU** HAVE NOT HEEDED MY SUMMONS.

WHAT CONCERNS ME IS THAT YOU HOSTED A VAMPIRE UNKNOWN TO YOUR BROTHERS **WITHOUT** MY KNOWLEDGE.

WHAT CONCERNS ME IS YOUR **GROWING** **HOARD** OF **SECRETS**.

COME CLOSER, RAZIEL.





I MUST SPEAK THE TRUTH, FOR HE KNOWS MORE THAN HE WOULD ADMIT.

SHE DEMANDED THAT I BRING HER THE HEART OF DARKNESS.

CLANK
CLING
CLANG
ARRGGHH!

THE WEIGHT OF KAIN'S FURY LIFTED FROM MY SHOULDERS, YET THE WEIGHT OF MY WINGS STILL BURDENED ME. I HAD SUCCEEDED IN CONCEALING THIS CHANGE FROM MY MASTER...

THE NEXT TIME YOU ENCOUNTER THIS DECEIVER, YOU WILL BRING ME HER HEAD.

BY THE PILLARS! WHAT SIGNIFICANCE DOES THE HEART OF DARKNESS HOLD FOR HIM TO PROVOKE SUCH RAGE?

...FOR NOW.



KAIN SCOLDED ME FOR KEEPING SECRETS, YET HIS OWN MULTIPLY, AND MY TROUBLES WITH THEM.

ELAETH'S ARRIVAL AT MY DOORSTEP WAS NO SURPRISE TO HIM.

AND MY OWN TOLERANCE FOR SURPRISE HAS REACHED ITS END.

YOU UNDERSTAND ELAETH MORE PROFOUNDLY THAN SHE UNDERSTANDS HERSELF.

UNVEIL THE SOURCE OF HER MALICE. REVEAL THE DEBT SHE BELIEVES I OWE HER.





YOU TOIL LATE THIS EVENING, MATHIAS. I HOPE I HAVE NOT MISTAKEN THE HOUR.

YOU ARE NOT MISTAKEN. I WAS ENSNARED BY MY WORK...TO FINISH THIS.



ELAETH, I LOVE YOU. I HAVE LOVED YOU SINCE WE WERE CHILDREN, AND AS WE GREW, SO TOO DID MY LOVE FOR YOU.

I'M A COMMONER. I HAVE NO LAND, NO TITLE, NO WEALTH. ALL I HAVE IS MY HONOR, MY SKILL WITH FIRE AND STEEL, AND MY WISH TO SEE YOU HAPPY.



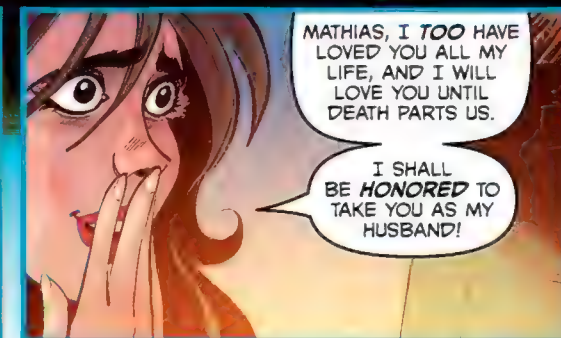
DID YOU MAKE THAT?

I DID.

DO NOT TELL YOUR FATHER I SAID SO, BUT I BELIEVE THE SKILL OF THE APPRENTICE HAS SURPASSED THAT OF THE MASTER. IT IS EXQUISITE.

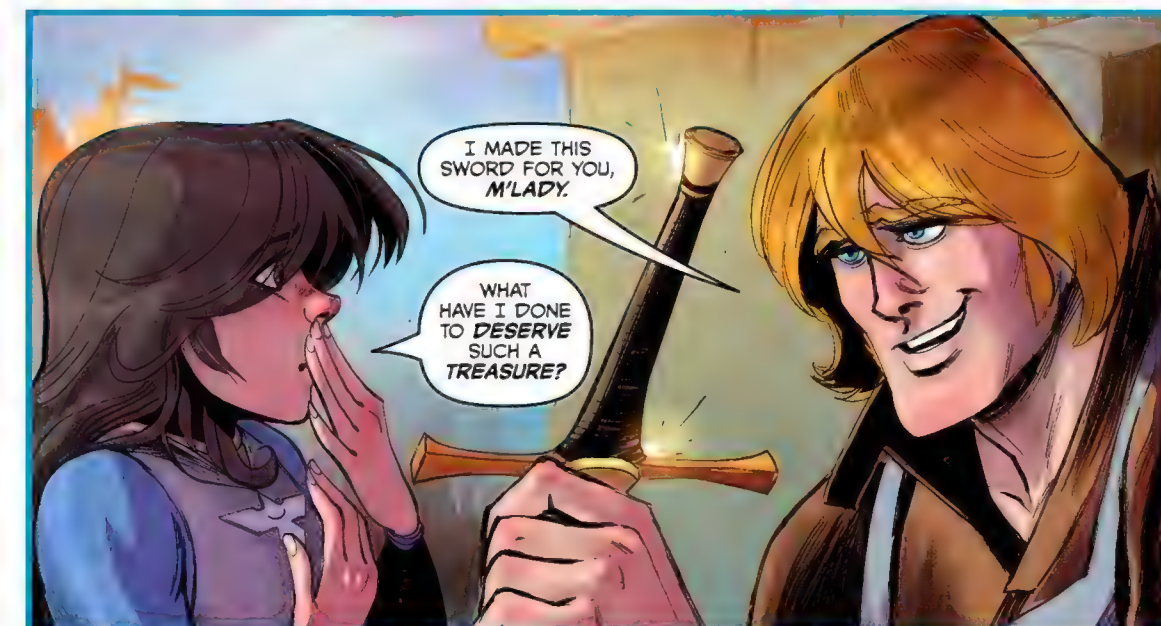


ELAETH... I WOULD MAKE YOU MY BRIDE IF YOU WOULD HAVE ME.



MATHIAS, I TOO HAVE LOVED YOU ALL MY LIFE, AND I WILL LOVE YOU UNTIL DEATH PARTS US.

I SHALL BE HONORED TO TAKE YOU AS MY HUSBAND!



I MADE THIS SWORD FOR YOU, M'LADY.

WHAT HAVE I DONE TO DESERVE SUCH A TREASURE?



IF I HAD DARED HOPE, I'D HAVE FORGED YOU A RING. A RING OF SUCH BEAUTY! BUT FOR NOW, THE SWORD--

--IS A SECRET BETWEEN US, A SYMBOL OF OUR INTENTION.

INDEED, IN TRUTH, I FEAR YOUR FATHER'S WRATH. YOU ARE A LADY OF THORNBLADE, AND I AM BUT A MERE BLACKSMITH.

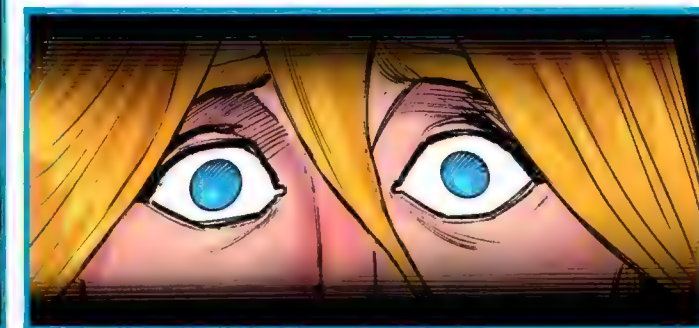


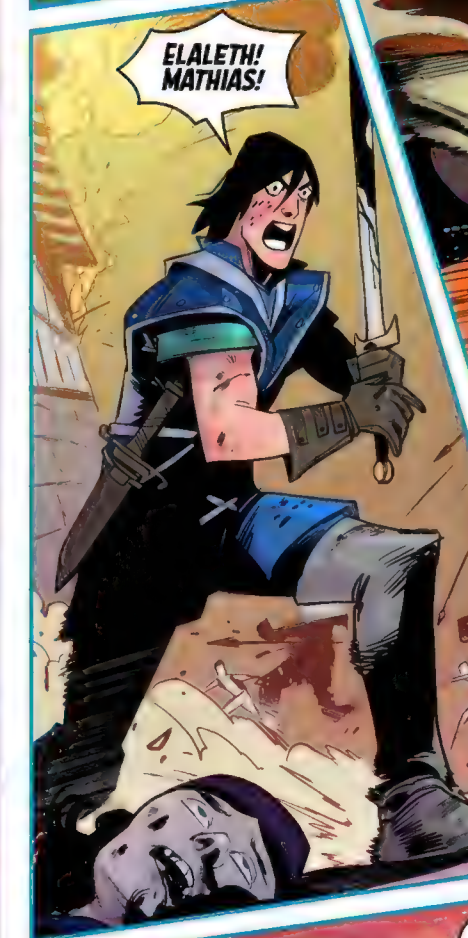
MY FATHER WILL RAISE YOU TO THE GENTRY AND DECLARE US A SUITABLE MATCH. IT IS NOT MY PARENTS WHO SHOULD CONCERN YOU.

RAZIEL HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO PROTECTIVE OF YOU.

THE HEIR APPARENT TO THE LORD OF THORNBLADE WILL HAVE A SAY IN THIS.

NO MATTER. IF HE OBJECTS, I WILL CHALLENGE HIM TO A DUEL. I'VE BESTED MY BROTHER BEFORE, EVEN IF ONLY WITH A WOODEN BLADE. BUT WITH THIS AS MY WEAPON...





THE AMULET'S VISION WAS RELENTLESS, COLD AND UNSYMPATHETIC. IT TOUCHED A HUMAN PULSE SLUMBERING WITHIN A VAMPIRE'S DORMANT HEART.

MOTHER!
FATHER!

KAIN, THE MASTER TO WHOM I HAD SWORN LINDYING ALLEGIANCE, SLEW WITH ABANDON. HIS VIOLENCE WAS... PERFECT.

LET THEM GO!
LEAVE THIS PLACE,
CREATURE!

AH! THE
YOUNG
SCION OF
THORN-
LACH.

WHY HAVE
YOU COME
HERE,
VAMPIRE?
WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?

TO SET YOU ON THE
PATH *DESTINY* HAS LAID
BEFORE YOU.

NO.
PLEASE.

SLASH

NO.

CRACK

WE ARE
SAVED!

THE SARAFAN
HAVE ARRIVED!

THANKS
BE TO THE
GODS!

RIGHT
ON TIME.

BEGONE, LITTLE
LORD. THORNLACH HOLDS
NAUGHT FOR YOU. JOIN THE
SARAFAN LEGENDS OF YOUR
YOUTH AND RIDE FORTH TO
GLORY AND RENOWN.

DESTROY
THE VAMPIRE
HORDE!

STAB

CLANG

SLASH

CLAW

SPURT



MATHIAS!
WHERE ARE
YOU?



MATHIAS!



Hisssss



WRETCHED
THING!

I AM NO
WRETCHED
THING! I AM
VODALUS...

VAMPIRE!

I AM
SOMETHING
MORE... AND
SOMETHING LESS.
OLDER THAN
NAMES, OLDER
THAN THE HUNGER
HE WILL COME
TO KNOW.

YOU HAVE
INFECTED
MATHIAS!

A TRIBUTE
SACRIFICED AT MY
SHORES. I TOOK ONLY
A TASTE.

IN EXCHANGE, I
BESTOWED UPON HIM A
VAMPIRIC GIFT...

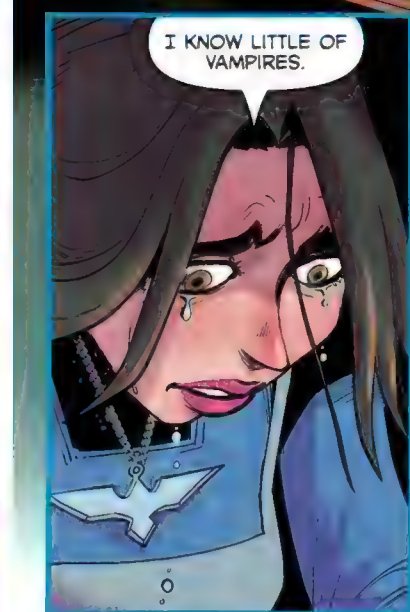


ELAETH... I
AM SORRY...
IT'S...

IT'S TOO
LATE.

I WILL
NOT LET
YOU DIE.

I AM NOT
DYING. I AM
CHANGING.



I KNOW LITTLE OF
VAMPIRES.



AND LESS
STILL OF THAT
ABOMINATION.

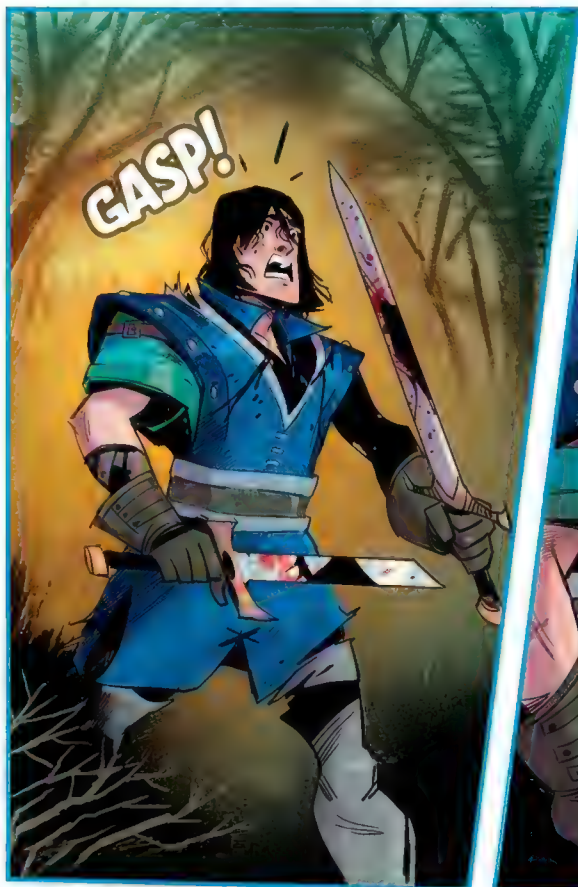
BUT I
DO KNOW THAT
THEY MUST...



...FEED.



PERHAPS THIS
WILL HELP YOU
GAIN STRENGTH
TO FIGHT THE
INFECTION!



NO, RAZIEL!
IT IS *NOT* WHAT
IT SEEMS!

MATHIAS...
UNDEAD, AND
DRAINING THE
LIFE OF MY
SISTER!

HE REQUIRES
STRENGTH TO FIGHT
THE INFECTION! HE
WILL SURVIVE THIS!
HE MUST!



YOU
ARE NAÏVE,
ELAETH.



DID YOU NOT
WITNESS THE *DESTRUCTION*
OF OUR VILLAGE?

THE
MURDER
OF OUR
PARENTS?

HE
WILL SEEK
OUR ENDS,
UNLESS...



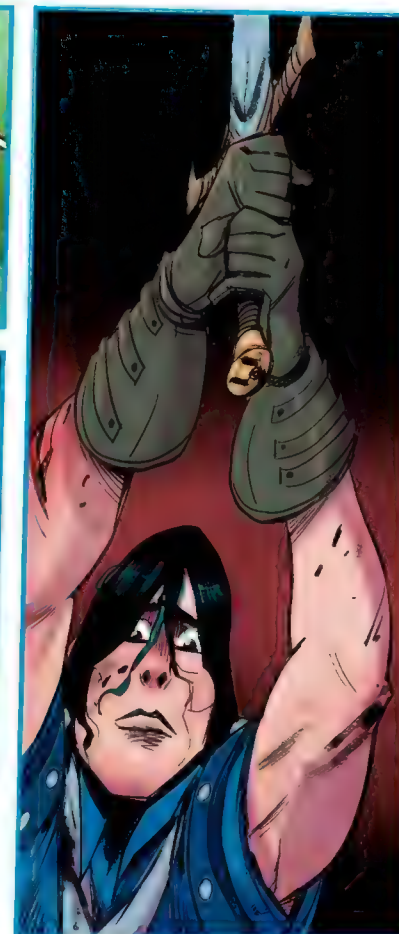
TAKE MY
HEAD AS
WELL, RAZIEL!
TAKE IT!

IT IS MY HOPE
THAT YOUR HAND WILL
BE ENOUGH... THAT PERHAPS
I SEVERED THE BLIGHT
BEFORE IT CREEPT TOWARD
YOUR *HEART*!



THAT IS
A FOOLISH
HOPE.

YOU
HAVE
ALREADY
TAKEN EVERY-
THING FROM ME.
GRANT ME THE
SAME QUICK
DEATH YOU
GIFTED
MATHIAS.





I CANNOT.



THE SARAFAN DRUMS. THEY ARE PREPARING TO RIDE. I MUST GO.

BOOM BOOM
BOOM BOOM



HOW MUCH OF YOUR BLOOD DID MATHIAS DRINK?



AND HOW MUCH OF YOUR BLOOD DID I SPILL?



YOUR HEART NO LONGER BEATS, SISTER...

BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM



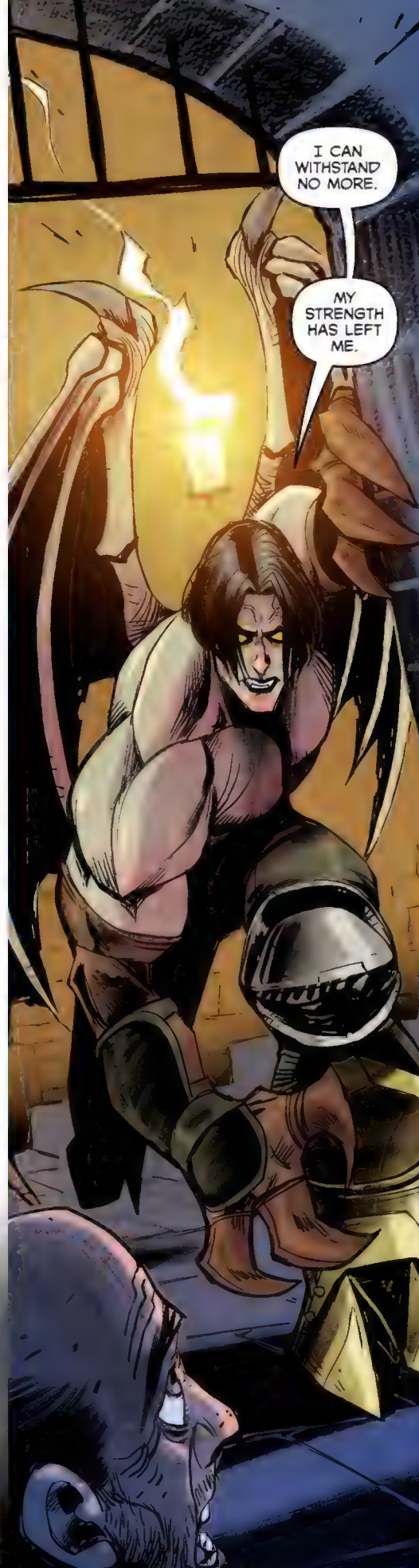
BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM

I WILL CLEANSER THIS WORLD OF VAMPIRES.



TO THINK I HAD DECLARED MY INTENT TO BECOME LORD OF THORNLACH...

HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE VAMPIRES' ATTACK, I MIGHT HAVE LIVED A CONTENTED, INSIGNIFICANT LIFE.



I CAN WITHSTAND NO MORE.

MY STRENGTH HAS LEFT ME.



I MUST FEED.

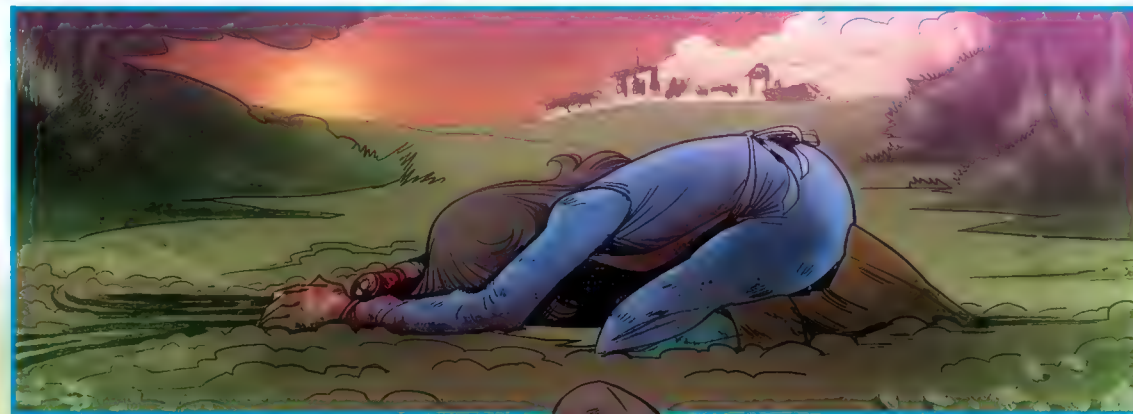
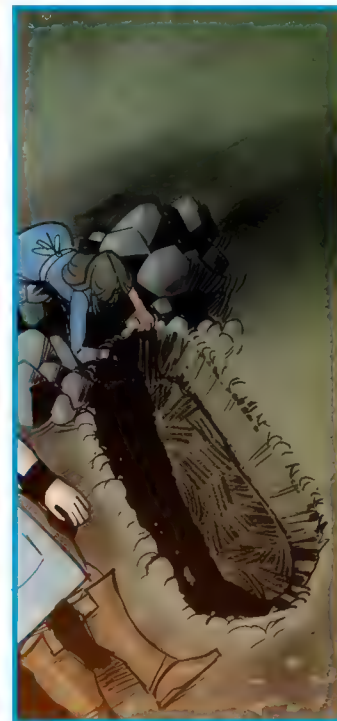
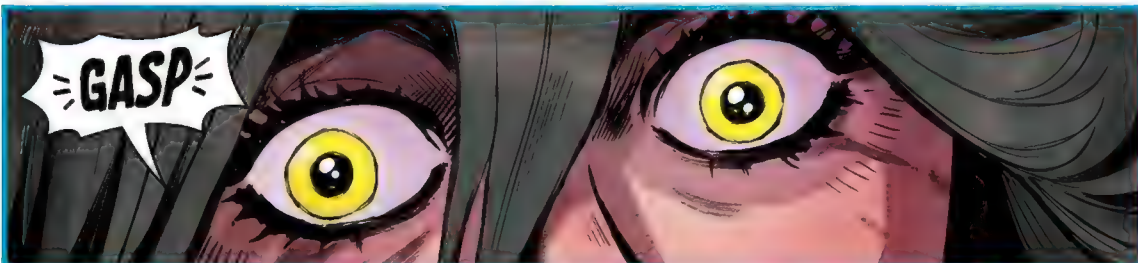
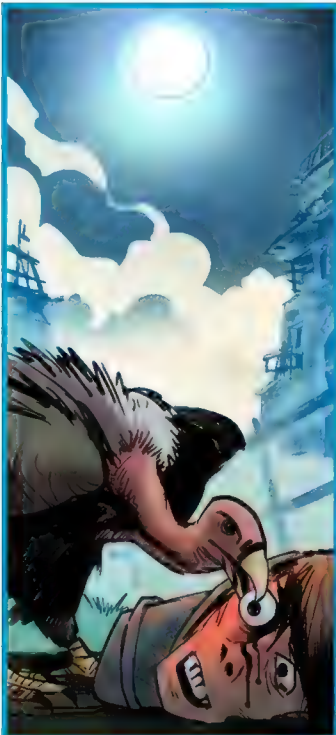


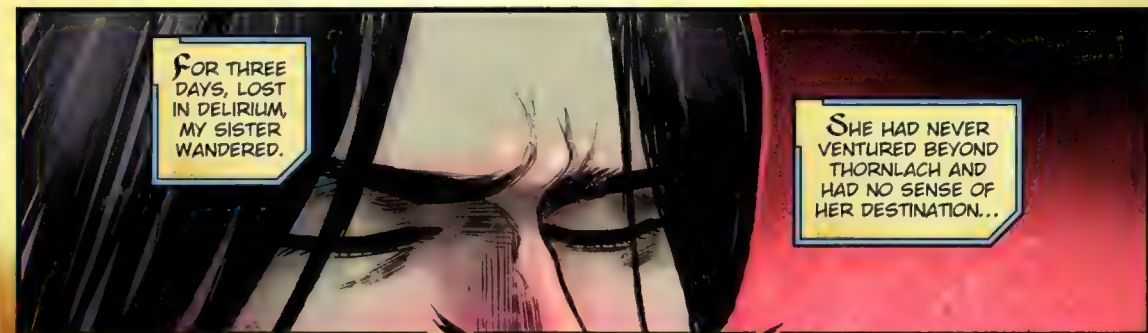
THE AMULET... IT CALLS ME BACK...

MEMORY IS AN OUROBORIC HUNGER. IS IT THE PRESENT THAT FEEDS ON THE PAST...



OR DOES THE PAST FEED ON THE PRESENT?





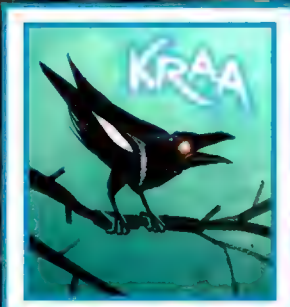
FOR THREE DAYS, LOST IN DELIRIUM, MY SISTER WANDERED.

SHE HAD NEVER VENTURED BEYOND THORN LACH AND HAD NO SENSE OF HER DESTINATION...



OR DESTINY.

YET SHE MOVED WITH PURPOSE, AS IF INSTINCT GUIDED HER... A PREDATOR DRAWN TO AN UNSEEN SCENT.



KRAA



HER HUNGER FOR REVENGE WAS STRONGER THAN HER THIRST FOR BLOOD. BUT HER STRENGTH HAD WANED.



HER WILL, IRONCLAD AS IT WAS, COULD NO LONGER FORESTALL HER FATE.

THREE DAYS PASSED.

ONCE SHE SURRENDERED TO DESTINY,
SHE AWOKE TRANSFORMED.

AND FAMISHED.

IT'S
YOU.

CHOMP
SLURP

DID YOU
BRING ME
THIS?

YOU MUST
BRING ME
MORE!

KRAA

KRAA
KRAA

DO YOU
WISH ME TO
FOLLOW
YOU?

LATER...

LEAD THE WAY,
RAVEN!

HELLO?

HAIL!

I SHALL ASK
THE QUESTIONS,
TRESPASSER!

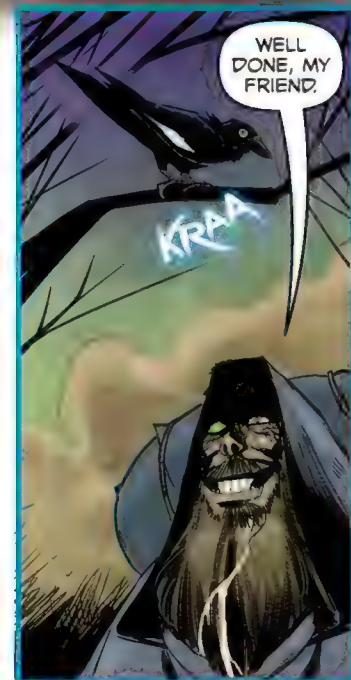
WHO'S
THERE?

HAD RAZIEL NOT
CHOSEN TO SAVE YOU
ALL THOSE YEARS AGO,
I WOULD HAVE CUT
YOUR THROAT!

WILL YOU
TRICK ME
INTO CUTTING
MINE?

IF THE RAVEN
WISHED ME HARM,
WHY WOULD IT
HAVE FED ME?

≡SIGH≡





BUT
THE **BLOOD** IS
ALL YOURS.



GAIN YOUR
STRENGTH. WE
HAVE **MUCH** TO
DISCUSS.



WHY ARE YOU
AIDING ME? WHAT
DO YOU **WANT** IN
RETURN?



I MUST ADMIT, IT
WAS RAZIEL I WAS HOPING
WOULD COME TO ME.

THE **TRINKET**
HANGING AROUND
YOUR NECK WAS
FASHIONED FOR
HIM, AFTER ALL.



THIS REVELATION CONFOUNDED
ME. I HAD NEVER MET THIS
HERMIT, THIS BEAST, NOR
ANYTHING LIKE HIM.

YET NOT ONLY DID
HE KNOW ME, HE
AWAITED ME.

WHAT OTHER
POWERS DID THE
AMULET HOLD?

HOW MANY DESTINIES
WERE ALTERED
BECAUSE I FAILED
TO RECOGNIZE A
GIFT MEANT FOR
ME ALONE?



BUT
ALAS, YOUR
BROTHER
CHOSE THE
SARAFAN
PATH.

AND FATE HAS
DELIVERED YOU TO
MY DOOR. THERE-
FORE, YOU AND I
MUST BARGAIN.

YOUR
HOSPITALITY
WAS OFFERED
FREELY.

I **NEVER**
AGREED TO
BARGAIN
WITH YOU.



YET BARGAIN
YOU WILL, OR I
WILL TURN YOU
OUT TO WANDER
THE MIST FOR ALL
ETERNITY.

SIT.
DOWN.



FIRST YOU
SAY YOU WANT TO
SEE ME OUT OF
YOUR WOODS, THEN
YOU THREATEN TO
ENTRAP ME WITHIN.
WHICH IS IT?

FOR THE
LAST TIME,
WHAT IS
YOUR WILL
OF ME?



I WANT YOU TO
UNDERSTAND **WHO**
I AM...

WHO I
WAS...

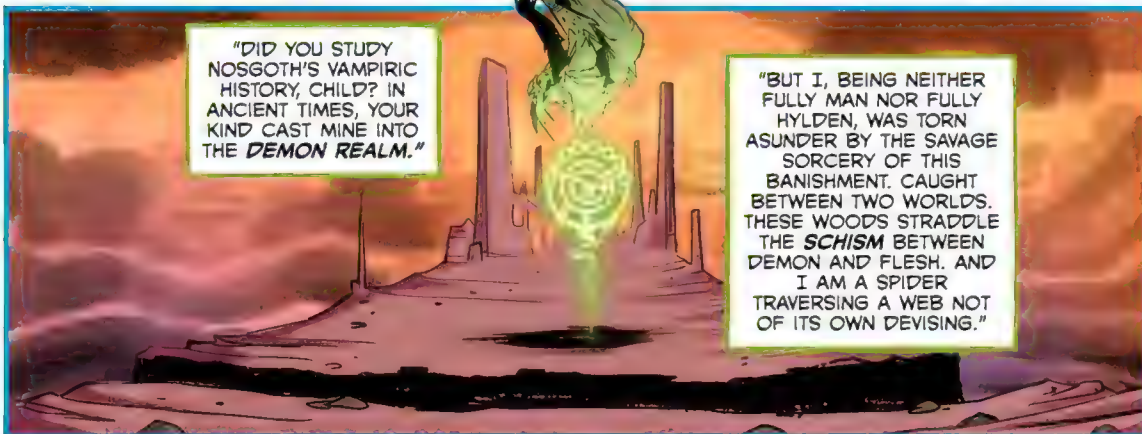
AND
WHO I WILL
BE...



"THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, I WAS NOT THE BEAST YOU SEE BEFORE YOU NOW. I WAS A MAN."

"A MAN CURSED."

"CURSED TO WALK THE WORLD AS A **HALF-HYLDEN ABOMINATION**. CURSED FOR ONE FOOLISH ACT THAT HAS RULED MY DESTINY EVER SINCE."



"DID YOU STUDY NOSGOTH'S VAMPIRIC HISTORY, CHILD? IN ANCIENT TIMES, YOUR KIND CAST MINE INTO THE **DEMON REALM**."

"BUT I, BEING NEITHER FULLY MAN NOR FULLY HYLDEN, WAS TORN ASUNDER BY THE SAVAGE SORCERY OF THIS BANISHMENT. CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO WORLDS. THESE WOODS STRADDLE THE **SCHISM** BETWEEN DEMON AND FLESH. AND I AM A SPIDER TRAVERSING A WEB NOT OF ITS OWN DEVISING."



"IN A CRUEL TURN OF DESTINY, MY HUMAN HALF WAS SENT BELOW, AND MY HYLDEN HALF WAS LEFT BEHIND."

"HERE I REMAIN, CONSTRAINED BY TETHERS OF MIST."

"BUT AS YOU NOW SEE, I CAN ENTERTAIN GUESTS."



YOU ARE NOT THE FIRST TO ANSWER MY INVITATION, THOUGH IT HAS BEEN AN AGE SINCE ANY DARED. ONCE, OTHERS CALLED THESE WOODS THEIR HOME AS WELL. ONE OF THEM YOU'VE **ALREADY** ENCOUNTERED. HE NOW FAVORS THE SWAMPS OF THORNLACH OVER THESE LANDS.

KRAA



IS THAT WHY YOU THREATENED TO KEEP ME HERE? BECAUSE YOU SEEK **COMPANIONSHIP**?



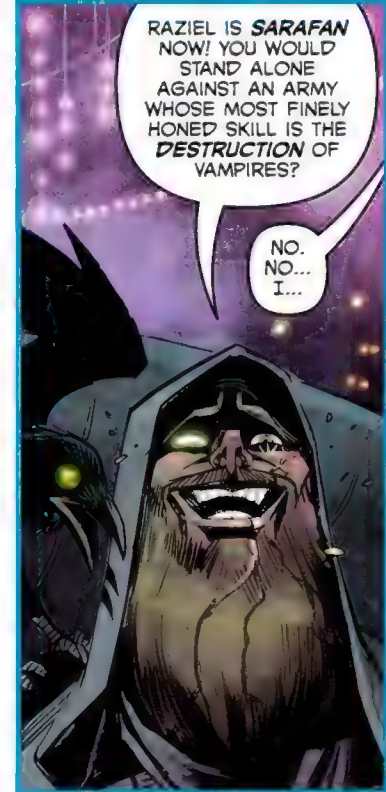
BECAUSE I HAVE DEVISED A PLAN... ONE THAT NOW IRREVOCABLY INCLUDES **YOU**.

I HAVE TOLD YOU MY STORY. NOW TELL ME YOURS. YOU HAVE WANDERED FAR FROM HOME. WHERE WERE YOU GOING?

WHAT DO YOU SEEK?



RAZIEL IS A **MURDERER**. I WILL BRING HIM TO JUSTICE.



RAZIEL IS **SARAFAN** NOW! YOU WOULD STAND ALONE AGAINST AN ARMY WHOSE MOST FINELY HONED SKILL IS THE **DESTRUCTION** OF VAMPIRES?

NO. NO... I...



WE WERE TAUGHT TALES OF...NINE PILLARS, AND GUARDIANS WHO...

GUARDIANS WHO WHAT?

WHO, PERHAPS IF I ASKED THEM, MIGHT...HELP ME.



FOOLISH, PROVINCIAL GIRL.



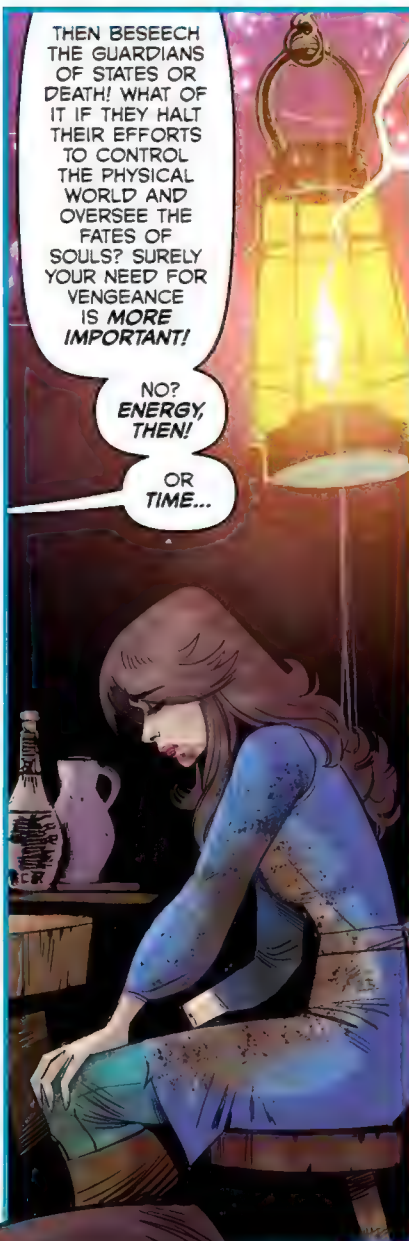
WHICH PILLAR GUARDIAN WOULD YOU BESEECH?

THE MIND GUARDIAN, PERHAPS? OR DIMENSION? DID IT OCCUR TO YOU THEY MIGHT BE OCCUPIED WITH SENTENCE, AND HOLDING THE SPACES AMONG AND WITHIN THE REALMS?

NO. I DO NOT BELIEVE IT ENTERED YOUR THOUGHTS.

WHAT THEN OF NATURE, CONFLICT, OR BALANCE? MIGHT YOUR TROUBLES USURP THEIR ENDEAVORS TO GOVERN THE **VERY NATURE THAT BINDS US**? THE CONSTANT FLUX OF POWER AND INFLUENCE OF SPIRIT?

AGAIN, **NO**. BEST LEAVE THEM TO THEIR PURSUITS.



THEN BESEECH THE GUARDIANS OF STATES OR DEATH! WHAT OF IT IF THEY HALT THEIR EFFORTS TO CONTROL THE PHYSICAL WORLD AND OVERSEE THE FATES OF SOULS? SURELY YOUR NEED FOR VENGEANCE IS **MORE IMPORTANT!**

NO? **ENERGY, THEN!**

OR **TIME...**



TIME!

TELL ME ABOUT THE GUARDIAN OF TIME.



I AM **MOCKING** YOU, CHILD. CAN YOU NOT PARSE THE RIDICULE IN MY VOICE?

THE GUARDIANS CREATED AND CONTROL THE SARAFAN. THEY ARE FRIEND TO NEITHER YOUR CAUSE NOR YOUR KIND. YOU ARE AN ABOMINATION TO THEM. A **FLAW** IN THE WORKINGS OF THE WORLD.

NOR ARE THEY FRIEND TO MY KIND. THE PILLARS WERE RAISED TO IMPRISON THE HYLDEN. AND EVEN IF **MOEBIUS**—

MOEBIUS! IS HE THE TIME GUARDIAN?

SLAP



HEED MY WORDS, GIRL. OF ALL THE GUARDIANS, MOEBIUS IS NOT THE ONE WHOSE PATH YOU WOULD WISH TO **CROSS**.



HE WHO GUARDS TIME CAN **CHANGE** TIME.

HE WHO CHANGES TIME CAN **CHANGE** THE PAST.

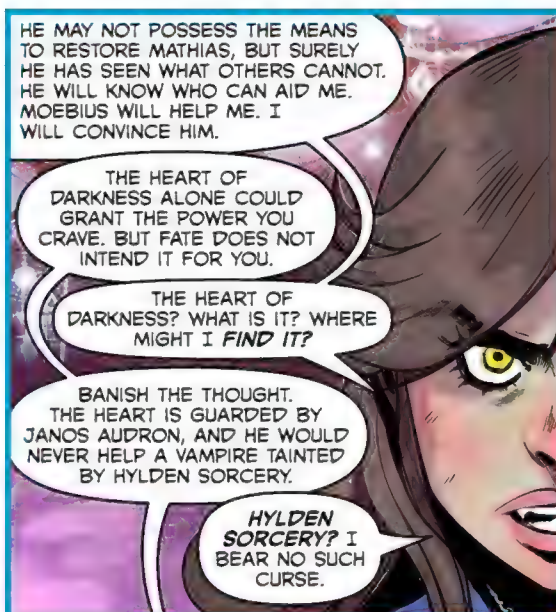
AND HE WHO CAN CHANGE THE PAST CAN **RESTORE** MY VILLAGE... AND MY **BELOVED**.



YOU ARE MAD TO ENTERTAIN SUCH THOUGHTS. MOEBIUS FORGES THE STREAM OF TIME, IT IS TRUE.

BUT MOEBIUS IS AS **TREACHEROUS** AS TIME ITSELF.

YOUR BELOVED IS GONE, CHILD. YOU MUST RELINQUISH THIS DELUSION.



HE MAY NOT POSSESS THE MEANS TO RESTORE MATHIAS, BUT SURELY HE HAS SEEN WHAT OTHERS CANNOT. HE WILL KNOW WHO CAN AID ME. MOEBIUS WILL HELP ME. I WILL CONVINCE HIM.

THE HEART OF DARKNESS ALONE COULD GRANT THE POWER YOU CRAVE. BUT FATE DOES NOT INTEND IT FOR YOU.

THE HEART OF DARKNESS? WHAT IS IT? WHERE MIGHT I **FIND IT**?

BANISH THE THOUGHT. THE HEART IS GUARDED BY JANOS AUDRON, AND HE WOULD NEVER HELP A VAMPIRE TAINTED BY HYLDEN SORCERY.

HYLDEN SORCERY? I BEAR NO SUCH CURSE.



NO? YOU CARRY THE DARK GIFT, CHILD... THE BLOOD CURSE IN ITS PUREST FORM, PASSED FROM ONE INFECTED BY A HYLDEN, NOT A VAMPIRE.

MY RAVEN INVITED YOU INTO THE MIST, YES, BUT IT WAS THE CURSE THAT GUIDED YOU HERE. YOU SENSED IT, AS ONLY THOSE TOUCHED BY HYLDEN SORCERY DO.

NOW, TO THE MATTER OF OUR BARGAIN.

I WILL RESTORE YOUR HAND, THOUGH THIS REQUIRES THAT YOU SUBMIT TO MORE HYLDEN MAGIC.



THROUGH THIS MAGIC, I WILL ALSO BESTOW UPON YOU TRUE POWER. WITH THAT TRUE POWER... ONCE YOU PASS BEYOND MY WOODS...

...YOU WILL DO SOMETHING FOR ME. THAT IS MY **PRICE**.



IF I **REFUSE**, I WANDER THE MIST FOR ALL ETERNITY?

OR UNTIL I DECIDE TO RELEASE YOU.

ONCE I LEAVE THIS WOOD, WHO'S TO FORCE ME TO DO WHAT YOU ASK?



YOU WILL LEARN THAT HYLDEN MAGIC IS A MAGIC OF **CONSEQUENCES**.

WOULD YOU RATHER LIVE OUT YOUR EXISTENCE LOST IN MY WOODS, OR WOULD YOU RATHER KEEP THE ETERNAL COMPANY OF MY HUMAN HALF IN THE DEMON REALM, KNOWING THE WAY BACK WOULD BE CLOSED TO YOU FOREVER?

≡SIGH≡

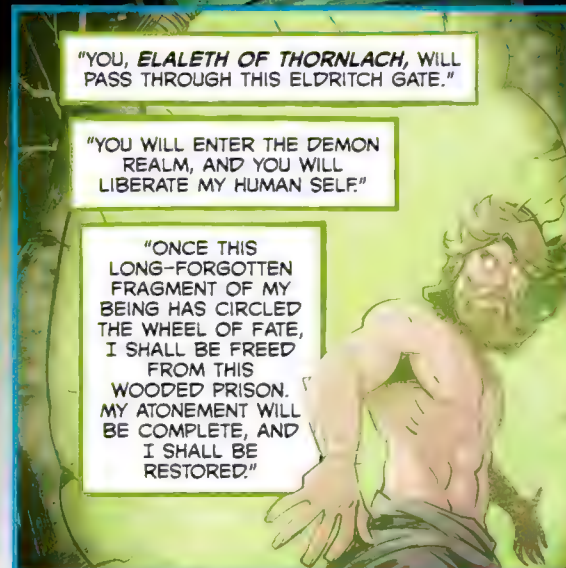
WHAT MUST I DO?



"HIGH ABOVE THE BRIDGE OF SACRIFICE, YOU WILL FIND A **PORTAL** FEW KNOW, A PORTAL THROUGH WHICH FEWER HAVE PASSED."

"A SECRET HYLDEN PORTAL BETWEEN THE MATERIAL REALM..."

"...AND THE REALM OF **DEMONS**."



"YOU, **ELAETH OF THORNLACH**, WILL PASS THROUGH THIS ELDRITCH GATE."

"YOU WILL ENTER THE DEMON REALM, AND YOU WILL LIBERATE MY HUMAN SELF."

"ONCE THIS LONG-FORGOTTEN FRAGMENT OF MY BEING HAS CIRCLED THE WHEEL OF FATE, I SHALL BE FREED FROM THIS WOODED PRISON. MY ATONEMENT WILL BE COMPLETE, AND I SHALL BE RESTORED."



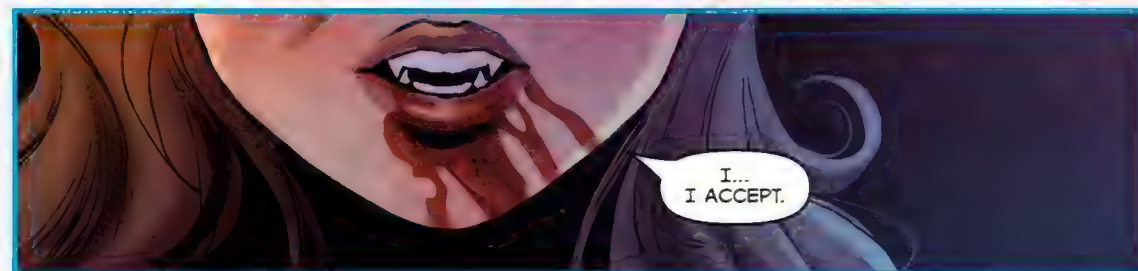
WHAT DANGERS, WHAT **TERRORS**, AWAIT ME IN THE DEMON REALM?



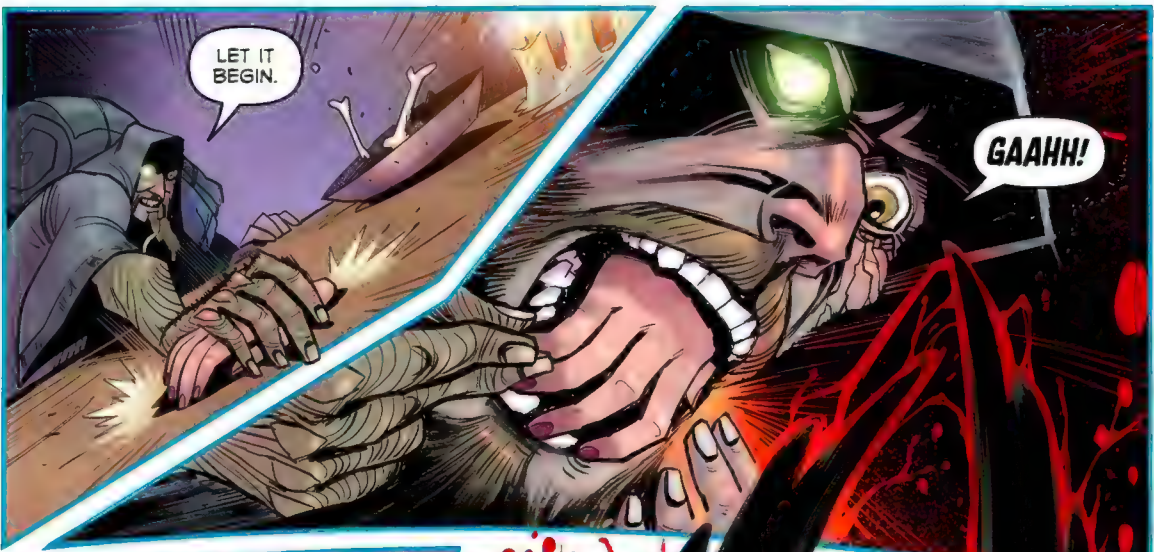
I CANNOT SAY WHAT AWAITS YOU THERE. WHAT I HAVE SEEN OF IT IN MY VISIONS DEFIES ACCOUNT.

HOW DO YOU PROPOSE THAT I APPROACH THIS ELDRITCH GATE? ON THE BACK OF YOUR RAVEN?

ACCEPT OUR BARGAIN. SUBMIT TO THE MAGIC... AND TO THE AGONY IT REQUIRES... AND SEE.



I... I ACCEPT.

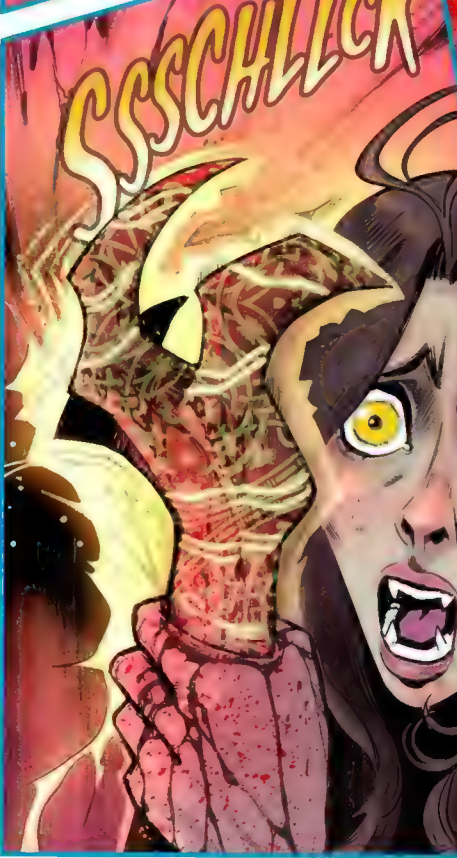


LET IT BEGIN.

GAAHH!



!



SSSCHLICK



WHOOOO
EEEEAAA!



HER QUEST FOR VENGEANCE BECAME SOMETHING MORE PROFOUND.

I HAD BEGUN TO SURMISE THAT KY'SET'SYK'S SINISTER BARGAIN WAS THE REASON MY SISTER HAD BEEN UNABLE TO FIND ME UNTIL NOW...

THAT PERHAPS SHE HAD BEEN TRAPPED IN THE DEMON REALM THESE MANY CENTURIES, ENSNARED BY FATE'S CRUEL MACHINATIONS.



BUT THE AMULET REVEALED THE TRUTH. SHE WAS CHANGED. SHE HAD EVOLVED.



AT LAST.

I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.



I GROW TIRED OF ENCOUNTERING STRANGERS WHO SEEM TO KNOW ME.

LET ME PASS.



HA HA HA HA HA

DO YOU **NOT** RECOGNIZE ME?

DID YOU NOT TELL KY'SET'SYK THAT YOU WOULD CONVINCE ME TO DO YOUR BIDDING?

MOEBIUS.



AND YOU ARE ELALETH, SISTER TO LORD RAZIEL OF THORNLACH...

...OR RATHER, YOU WERE.

I SEE THAT KY'SET'SYK HAS ONCE AGAIN PERFORMED ONE OF HIS ABERRANT SORCERIES.

WHATEVER YOU ARE NOW... PART VAMPIRE, PART HYLDEN ABOMINATION... YOU ARE CERTAINLY NO LONGER THE LADY OF THORNLACH.



YOU WISH TO INSULT ME. YET HERE YOU ARE WAITING FOR ME.

TELL ME WHY.



DO NOT PRESUME TO COMMAND THE GUARDIAN OF TIME.



SHHRRRAK



WHOOOM

GAAAGHHH!



SWOOSH

ONLY WHEN YOU ARE PREPARED TO ADDRESS ME WITH PROPER RESPECT SHALL WE ENTERTAIN A DISCUSSION.

CRACKLE



UMMPH!

FZZT



ALREADY LEARNING...

...BUT STILL A FLEDGLING.

HMPH

THUD



KY'SET'SYK
WARNED ME
ABOUT YOU.

HE SAID YOU
AID NONE *BUT*
YOURSELF.



I ASSIST
OTHERS WHEN
DOING SO ALIGNS
WITH MY OWN
INTERESTS. IT
IS NO *SIMPLE* FEAT
TO KEEP THE
STREAM OF
TIME FLOWING
AS IT MUST.



THEN PLEASE,
O GREAT GUARDIAN
OF TIME, WITH ALL
DUE RESPECT, I *BEG*
BOTH YOUR PARDON
AND A FAVOR.



I KNOW
WHAT FAVOR
YOU WOULD
ASK.

I SAW THE
DESECRATION
VISITED UPON YOUR
VILLAGE BY THE
VAMPIRE HORDE.

I WATCHED AS YOU
TRIED *IN VAIN* TO SAVE
YOUR BELOVED...

FIRST FROM
THE VILE CLUTCHES OF
THAT ABOMINATION,
VODALUS...

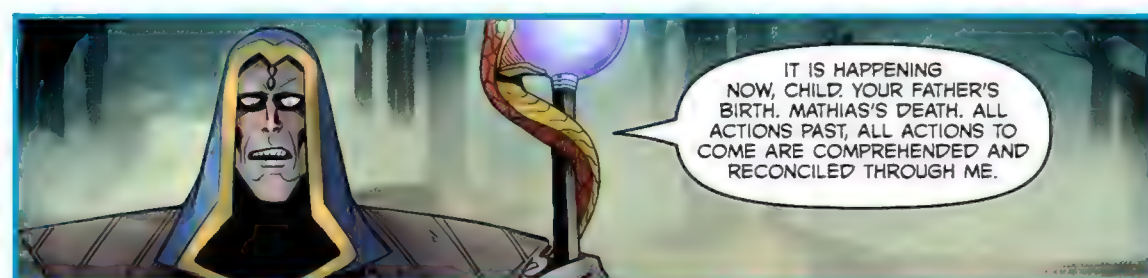
AND THEN FROM
THE BLADE OF YOUR
BROTHER.

THESE ARE
THE SORROWS YOU
SEEK TO REMEDY.

THE EVENTS
YOU WISH TO SEE
UNDONE.



TELL ME,
FROM YOUR
PERSPECTIVE, DID
THOSE HORRORS HAPPEN
YESTERDAY... OR
CENTURIES AGO...



IT IS HAPPENING
NOW, CHILD. YOUR FATHER'S
BIRTH, MATHIAS'S DEATH. ALL
ACTIONS PAST, ALL ACTIONS TO
COME ARE COMPREHENDED AND
RECONCILED THROUGH ME.



THEN HEAR
MY PLEADING
AND RECONCILE IT
TO MY *DESIRED*
OUTCOME!

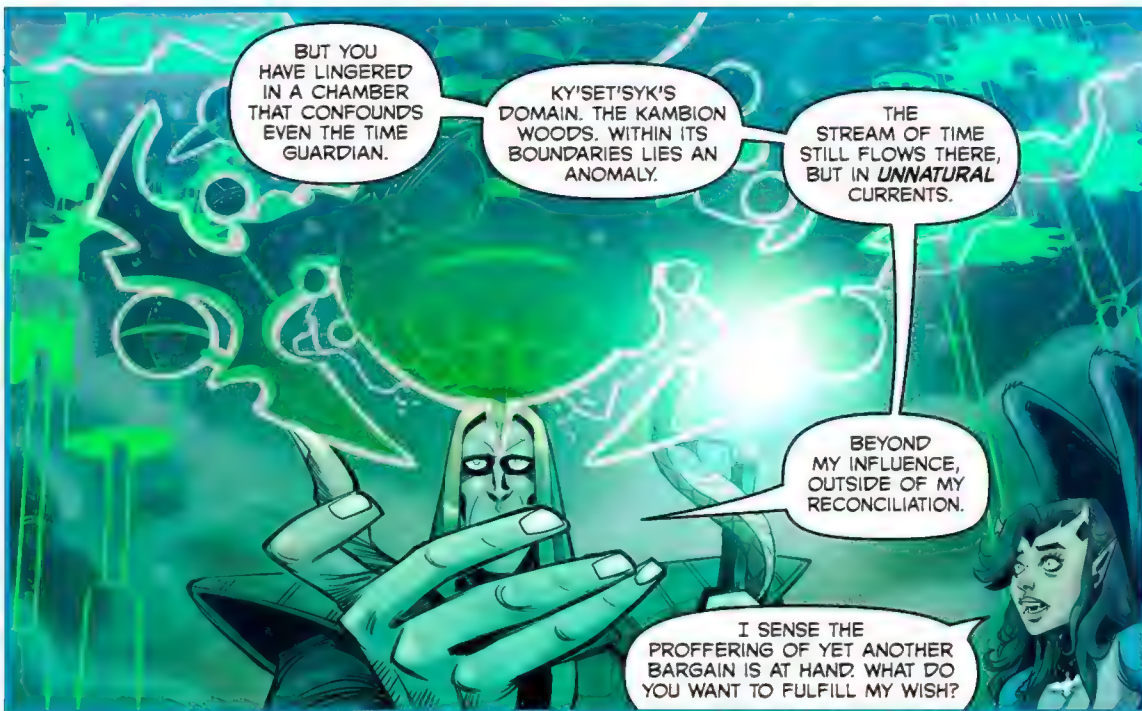


TIME'S
ARCHITECTURE IS NO
TRIFLING THING...

IT DEVISES
CHAMBERS FOR ALL
TO DWELL IN...



SOME
CHAMBERS ARE
MORE PLEASANT
THAN OTHERS...



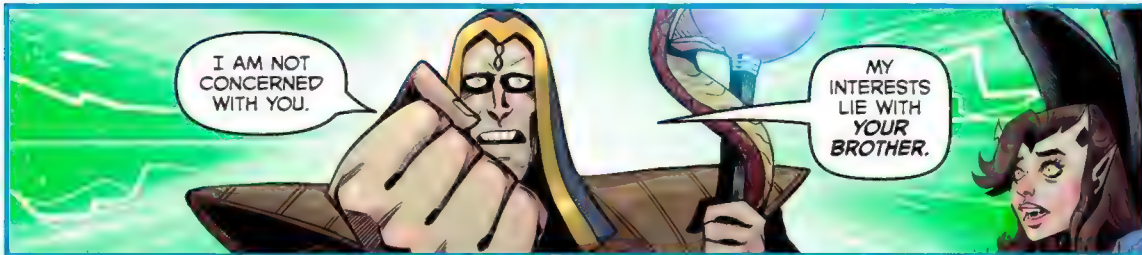
BUT YOU HAVE LINGERED IN A CHAMBER THAT CONFOUNDS EVEN THE TIME GUARDIAN.

KY'SET'SYK'S DOMAIN. THE KAMBION WOODS. WITHIN ITS BOUNDARIES LIES AN ANOMALY.

THE STREAM OF TIME STILL FLOWS THERE, BUT IN *UNNATURAL* CURRENTS.

BEYOND MY INFLUENCE, OUTSIDE OF MY RECONCILIATION.

I SENSE THE PROFFERING OF YET ANOTHER BARGAIN IS AT HAND. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO FULFILL MY WISH?



I AM NOT CONCERNED WITH YOU.

MY INTERESTS LIE WITH *YOUR* BROTHER.



WITH ME?

I KNEW, OF COURSE, THAT MOEBIUS DESPISED VAMPIRES, AND THAT HE HELD THE VAMPIRE-HUNTING SARAFAN IN THE HIGHEST REGARD.

BUT WHAT PART DID I PLAY IN THE TIME GUARDIAN'S PLAN?

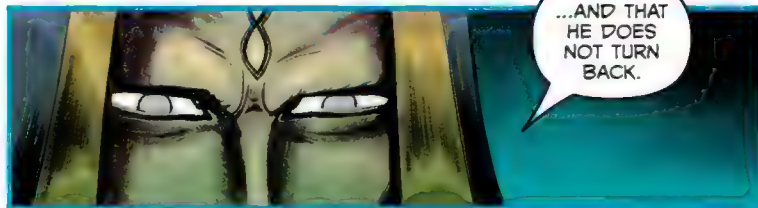


THE FORCES OF FATE AND WILL ARE LOCKED IN CONFLICT, AND YOUR BROTHER IS ENSNARED AT THE CROSSROADS.

I HAVE ALWAYS SEEN THE PATH RAZIEL MUST TREAD. LEAVING THORN LACH TO JOIN THE SARAFAN WAS MERELY ONE STEP ALONG THAT PATH.

I MUST ACT TO ENSURE HE DOES NOT STRAY...

...AND THAT HE DOES NOT TURN BACK.

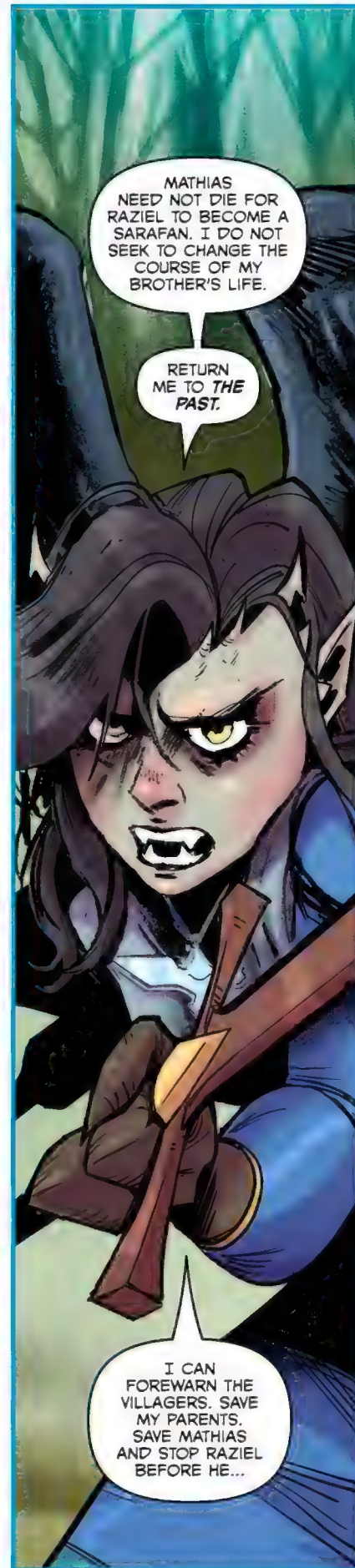


TURN BACK?

TEN YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE RAZIEL SWORE THE SARAFAN OATH. HE HAS RISEN AMONG THEIR RANKS.

HE IS AN INQUISITOR NOW. A COMMANDER OF MIGHTY WARRIORS. A COMMANDER OF RESPECT.

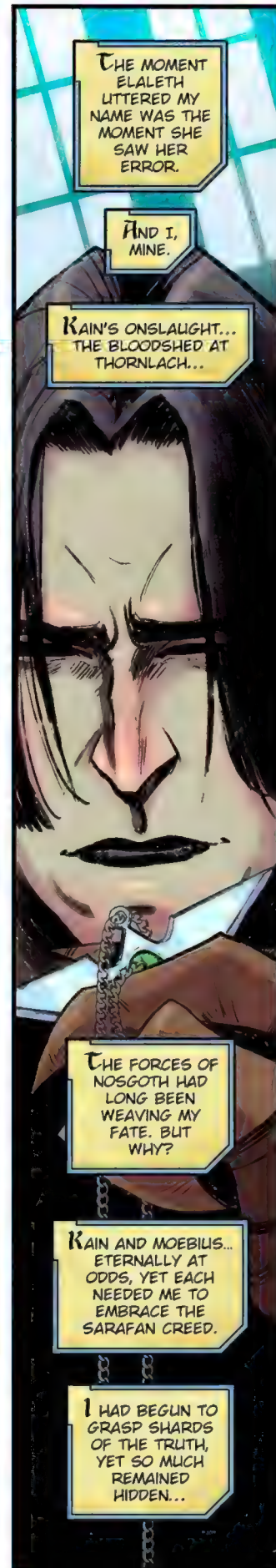
THERE MUST BE NO OBSTACLES IN HIS PATH.



MATHIAS NEED NOT DIE FOR RAZIEL TO BECOME A SARAFAN. I DO NOT SEEK TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF MY BROTHER'S LIFE.

RETURN ME TO *THE PAST*.

I CAN FOREWARN THE VILLAGERS. SAVE MY PARENTS. SAVE MATHIAS AND STOP RAZIEL BEFORE HE...



THE MOMENT ELAETH UTTERED MY NAME WAS THE MOMENT SHE SAW HER ERROR.

AND I, MINE.

RAIN'S ONSLAUGHT... THE BLOODSHED AT THORN LACH...

THE FORCES OF NOSGOTH HAD LONG BEEN WEAVING MY FATE. BUT WHY?

RAIN AND MOEBIUS... ETERNALLY AT ODDS, YET EACH NEEDED ME TO EMBRACE THE SARAFAN CREED.

I HAD BEGUN TO GRASP SHARDS OF THE TRUTH, YET SO MUCH REMAINED HIDDEN...



YES... THE FORCES OF NOSGOTH HAD INDEED LONG BEEN WEAVING MY FATE. HOW EASILY MOEBIUS SWEEP ELAETH ASIDE... SWATTED HER LIKE A FLY, INTO A PLACE AND TIME FROM WHENCE SHE COULD NOT INTERFERE WITH HIS PLANS.

WAS MOEBIUS RIGHT TO ASSUME I WOULD FORSAKE MY SARAFAN OATH HAD I LEARNED MY SISTER LIVED?

I COULD NOT SAY FOR SURE. NOT THEN.



BUT WHAT I GLIMPSED NEXT REVEALED WHAT BECAME OF ELAETH...

AND HOW OUR PATHS CROSSED LONG BEFORE THE NIGHT SHE CAME TO MY KEEP.

NO LONGER WAS THE AMULET SHOWING ME MY SISTER'S PAST. NO LONGER DID I NEED THE AMULET TO SEE...

IT WAS AS IF THE MAGIC IT CONTAINED HAD UNSHACKLED MY MIND, LEAVING ME NO REFUGE FROM THE TRUTH OF MY OWN PAST. I WOULD BE FORCED TO CONFRONT IT... WHETHER I WISHED IT OR NOT.



HOW MANY VAMPIRES DID I SLAUGHTER TO ASCEND TO THE RANK OF INQUISITOR?

HUNDREDS? THOUSANDS? MORE?

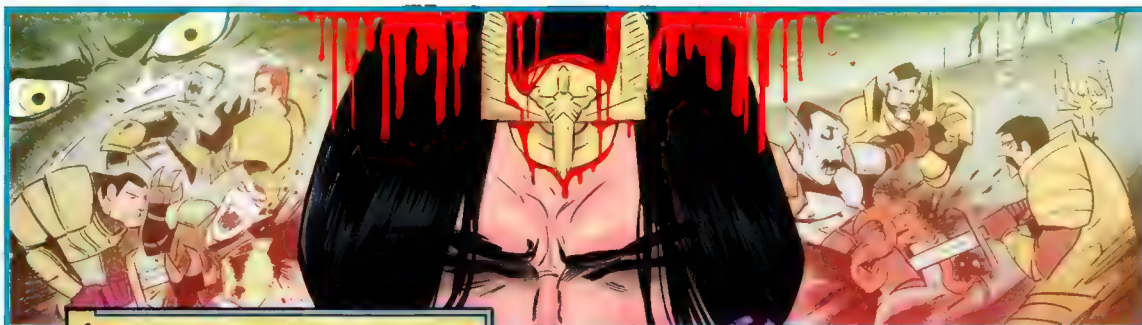


DUMAH! CEASE THIS MADNESS! THEY ARE INNOCENTS!

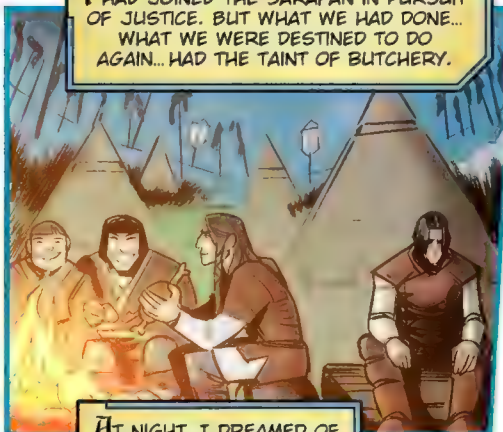
THEY MAY BE INFECTED, RAZIEL. CONTAMINATED.

WE WOULD BE WISE TO LEAVE NOTHING TO CHANCE.





I HAD JOINED THE SARAFAN IN PURSUIT OF JUSTICE. BUT WHAT WE HAD DONE... WHAT WE WERE DESTINED TO DO AGAIN... HAD THE TAIN OF BUTCHERY.



AT NIGHT, I DREAMED OF THORNLAGH. OF MY FAMILY AND MY BIRTHRIGHT.

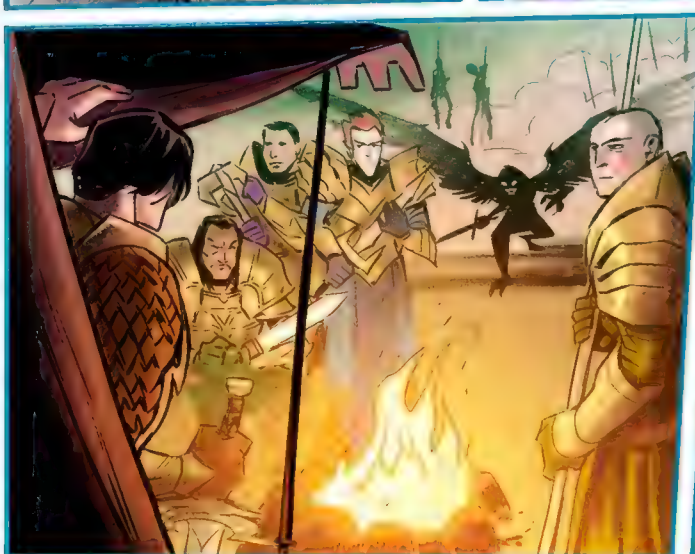


OF ALL THE VAMPIRE HORDE HAD TAKEN FROM ME.



I WAS HAUNTED BY WAKING VISIONS OF THE BLUE DEMON FROM MY YOUTH.

WHAT DID IT WANT? WHY WOULD IT NOT LEAVE ME IN PEACE?



≡GASP≡



ELAETH? YOU... YOU LIVE!



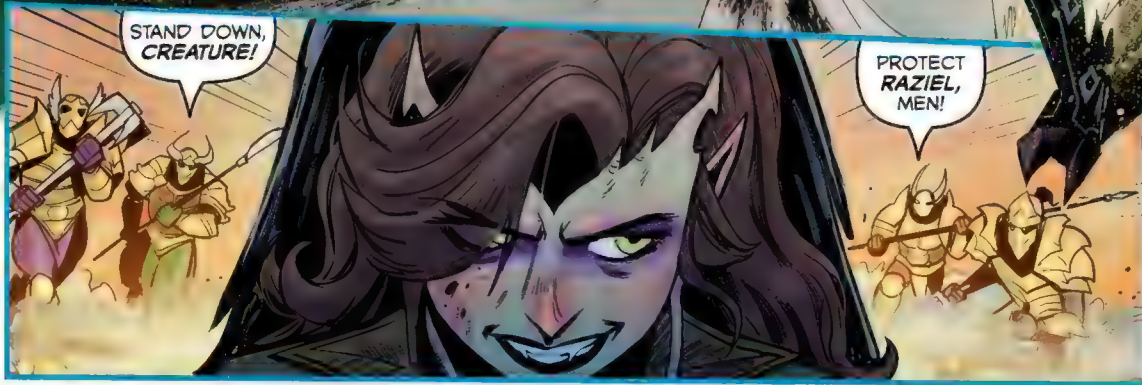
HELMETS! WEAPONS! WITH ME NOW, BROTHERS!



RAZIEL, FALL BACK! LET US HANDLE THIS CREATURE!



BY THE BLOOD OF JANOS AUDRON, DEAR BROTHER, YOU SHALL PAY FOR MATHIAS'S DEATH.



STAND DOWN, CREATURE!

PROTECT RAZIEL, MEN!



SLASH



EEEEAAAAHHH!!



MY SISTER LIVES. IMPOSSIBLE.



WHAT WAS THAT? DID SHE VANISH INTO THE ETHER?

NO VAMPIRE WIELDS SUCH POWER... NOT ALONE.



THEN WHAT IN NOSGOTH'S NAME DID WE JUST WITNESS?



THE WORK OF JANOS AUDRON. IT MUST BE. YOU HEARD HER INVOKE HIS NAME. HIS FOUL SORCERY PROTECTS HIS BROOD... BUT IT WILL NOT SPARE HIM FROM MY WRATH.



THE AMULET LAID BARE THE TRUE DEPTH OF MOEBIUS'S CURSE.



NOT AGAIN! AWAY WITH YOUR DECEITS, TIME GUARDIAN!

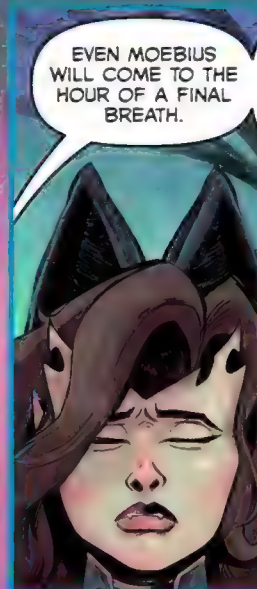


CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING TO BREAK THIS CURSE, HERMIT?



THE WILES OF MOEBIUS EXCEED MY POWER TO THWART. YOU ARE ENSNARED... ADRIPT UPON THE CURRENTS OF TIME, WITHOUT ANCHOR, WITHOUT DOMINION.

THEN THIS TORMENT IS ETERNAL?



EVEN MOEBIUS WILL COME TO THE HOUR OF A FINAL BREATH.



EVEN THE TIME GUARDIAN IS BOUND TO A MORTAL COIL. YOU WILL ENDURE WHERE HE CANNOT. AND WHEN HIS SCHEMING ENDS IN DUST, SO TOO SHALL YOUR SHACKLES FALL AWAY. SEIZE UPON THIS COMFORT IN COMFORTLESS TIMES.

MOEBIUS MUST LIVE! ONLY HE HOLDS THE KEY TO RETURNING ME TO MATHIAS. BUT I CANNOT REMAIN HIS PRISONER. THERE MUST BE ANOTHER WAY TO BREAK THIS CURSE.

SKRR



ELAETH WAS NOT MERELY ENSNARED WITHIN A PRISON OF TIME BUT SHATTERED ACROSS ITS ENDLESS STREAM.

CAST ADRIPT, UNMOORED FROM ANY SINGLE MOMENT, HURLED CEASELESSLY FROM ONE ERA TO THE NEXT. HER EXISTENCE A RELENTLESS CASCADE THROUGH THE AGES.

HOW LONG HAD SHE ENDURED THIS TORMENT? HOW MANY LIFETIMES DID SHE SUFFER, ALL BECAUSE OF THE PATH I FORCED UPON HER?

NOW I APPREHENDED THE WEIGHT OF HER HATRED. THE BITTERNESS THAT FESTERED IN THE WAKE OF MY FOLLY.

HOW MUCH LONGER MUST I TOLERATE THIS CURSED FATE?!

I WILL **KILL** HIM, TUREL. I WILL **TEAR** THE THROBBING HEART FROM HIS **STILL-LIVING** BODY.

A WASTED ERRAND, RAZIEL. IN THE TIME IT WOULD TAKE US TO INFILTRATE AUDRON'S RETREAT, WE COULD KILL A THOUSAND VAMPIRES JUST LIKE HIM.

THERE ARE NO VAMPIRES LIKE JANOS AUDRON. HE IS THEIR **PROGENITOR**. THE ROOT OF ALL OUR **STRIFE**!

STRIFE?
YES, BUT BECAUSE OF AUDRON, WE SARAFAN LIVE A LIFE OF **PURPOSE AND GLORY!** OF **TRIUMPH!** PERHAPS WE OWE HIM OUR THANKS---

SLAUGHTERING INNOCENTS IS HARDLY AN ACT OF GLORY.

I SPEAK TRULY. THAT... VAMPIRE... WAS MY **SISTER**. ELAETH... SHE SWORE AN OATH OF **VENGEANCE** AGAINST ME IN AUDRON'S NAME.

AND YOU BELIEVE THAT KILLING HIM WILL RESTORE YOUR SISTER'S HUMANITY?

THERE ARE RUMORS THAT AUDRON'S HEART CAN BRING ABOUT SUCH MIRACLES. YET EVEN IF THE RUMORS ARE FALSE, SURELY HIS DEATH CAN SEVER WHATEVER EVIL THRALL HE HOLDS OVER HER... AND THE REST OF HIS **ABOMINABLE** TRIBE.

PERHAPS IT CAN PUT ELAETH'S TORTURED SOUL TO **REST**.

I DO NOT PLACE FAITH IN MIRACLES. BUT I DO BELIEVE IN SLAYING VAMPIRES. WHY NOT AUDRON? IF YOU ARE RESOLUTE IN PURSUING THIS, AND I KNOW THAT YOU ARE, THEN I MAY HAVE A MEANS TO AID YOU...

SPEAK PLAINLY, WHAT AID CAN YOU OFFER?

THE TIME GUARDIAN'S STAFF. MOEBIUS WILL PART WITH IT, I AM **CERTAIN**, ONCE OUR MISSION IS MADE CLEAR. I WILL MEET HIM AT THE STRONGHOLD.

LATER...

TRUE TO HIS WORD, TUREL SECURED A MOST POWERFUL WEAPON. MOEBIUS HIMSELF LENT NOT ONLY HIS FANATICAL SUPPORT TO MY MISSION, BUT ALSO HIS STAFF.

»GASP!«

IT WAS DESTINY. IN THESE FINAL MOMENTS BEFORE WHAT I BELIEVED WOULD BE MY MOST GLORIOUS ACT AS A SARAFAN INQUISITOR, THERE WAS THE BLUE DEMON...

LEADING ME TO MY FATE.

WHAT IS THAT... THING?

SOME SORT OF VAMPIRE ABOMINATION.

PERHAPS IT WAS SENT TO SHOW US THE WAY WE FOLLOW, BUT QUIETLY.



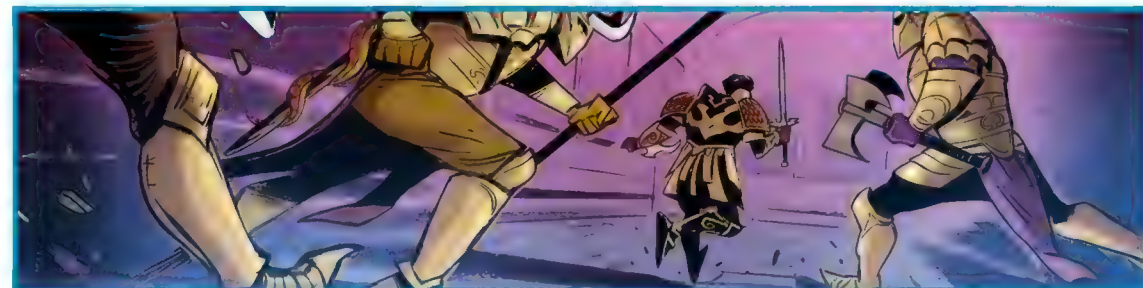
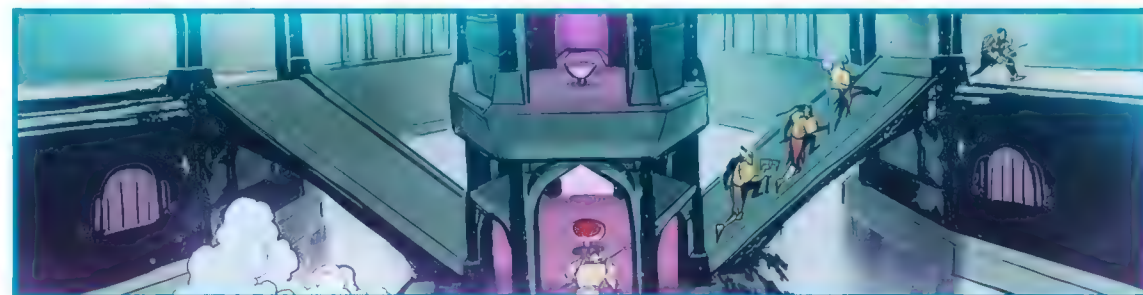
WE ARE HARD UPON AUDRON'S WRETCHED AERIE, BROTHERS. FORTIFY YOUR COURAGE!



THAT CREATURE DID THIS...

WHERE DID IT GO?

OUR BROTHERS MAY HAVE FALLEN, BUT THEIR SACRIFICE WILL NOT BE IN VAIN!



I CAN ALREADY HEAR JANOS AUDRON'S HEART BEATING ITS LAST!

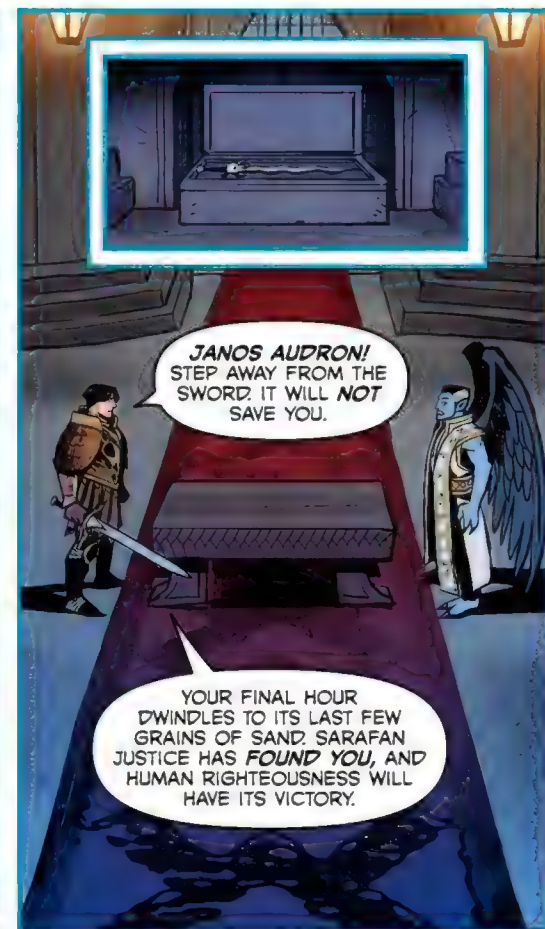


FOLLOW ME!



THE BLUE DEMON HAD VANISHED, BUT I COULD AFFORD NO TIME TO PONDER ITS WHEREABOUTS.

BEFORE ME STOOD MY WRETCHED QUARRY.



JANOS AUDRON! STEP AWAY FROM THE SWORD. IT WILL NOT SAVE YOU.

YOUR FINAL HOUR DWINDLES TO ITS LAST FEW GRAINS OF SAND. SARAFAN JUSTICE HAS FOUND YOU, AND HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL HAVE ITS VICTORY.

THEN YOU BELIEVE AS THE OTHERS DO... THAT MY BLOODLINE DIES WITH ME?

WE ARE NOT SO FRAIL, HUMAN. YOU **FEAR** WHAT YOU **DON'T** UNDERSTAND, AND YOU DESPISE WHAT YOU FEAR.

DO NOT FLATTER YOURSELF, VAMPIRE. I NEITHER FEAR NOR DESPISE YOU. ALL YOU ARE TO ME IS A BITTER SEED FROM WHICH GREW NOTHING BUT ROT AND DEATH. I **PITY** YOU.

IF THAT BLACK THING BEATING INSIDE YOUR CHEST IS THE INSTRUMENT OF NOSGOTH'S SALVATION, THEN **SO BE IT.**

HOLD HIM!

AAAAARRGGHH!!

VWOOOM

SHRRIP

GRRAAHH!

I REMEMBER NOW THE COLD PULSE I FELT IN MY HAND. THIS WAS THE ARTIFACT OF MY ATONEMENT. THE TALISMAN THAT WOULD GRANT ELAETH HER MOST DESPERATE WISH.

THUMP THUMP

LOOK AT HIS **BLACK HEART!** HOW IT STILL BEATS!

...

THE FIEND INTENDS TO **BURY US ALIVE.** RAZIEL, WE MUST GET **OUT OF HERE!**

REMEMBER THE SWORD!

RUMBLE

NOT ONLY DID I ONCE GRASP THE BEATING HEART OF JANOS AUDRON, BUT IT WAS I WHO RIPPED IT FROM HIS CHEST.



WHERE IS RAZIEL? I WILL NOT ASK AGAIN.

UNNGGHHH...



DO AS YOU WISH TO US, VAMPIRE. IT CHANGES NOTHING. YOUR KIND'S TIME DRAWS TO ITS CLOSE.

TIME IS MORE SUBJECTIVE THAN YOU REALIZE.

ARE YOU *SO* CERTAIN? RAZIEL IS ALREADY ON HIS WAY TO JANOS AUDRON'S RETREAT... TO KILL HIM.



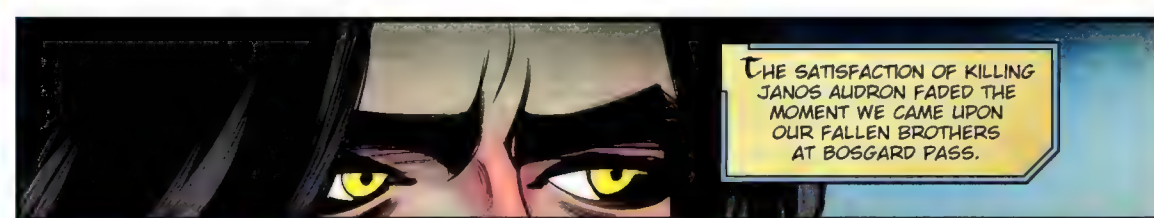
LIES!

I SPEAK TRUTH. HE TOOK HIS BEST MEN EARLIER TODAY. THE BEAST IS LIKELY DROWNING IN HIS OWN BLOOD AT THIS VERY MOMENT.



WAS IT NOT ENOUGH THAT RAZIEL TOOK MATHIAS FROM ME? NOW HE INTENDS TO *SLAY* THE FOREFATHER AS WELL? DOES HE BELIEVE FELL DEEDS REWARD THEMSELVES? DOES HE FEAR NO SANCTION?

HIS TRANSGRESSIONS AND BLASPHEMIES CAN NO LONGER GO UNPUNISHED!



THE SATISFACTION OF KILLING JANOS AUDRON FADED THE MOMENT WE CAME UPON OUR FALLEN BROTHERS AT BOSGARD PASS.



E'LALETH'S MESSAGE WAS CLEAR. TAKING AUDRON'S HEART HAD DONE NOTHING TO REVERSE OR END THE VAMPIRE CURSE. AND AUDRON'S BOAST WAS TRUE. THEY WERE NOT SO FRAGILE.

WHAT HAVE I DONE WRONG?



THE HEART HAD CEASED BEATING. A LIFELESS RELIC, AND PROOF OF TRUE DEATH... YET AUDRON'S PROGENY STILL THRIVED.



DID MY SISTER WISH TO REMAIN THE THING SHE HAD BECOME?

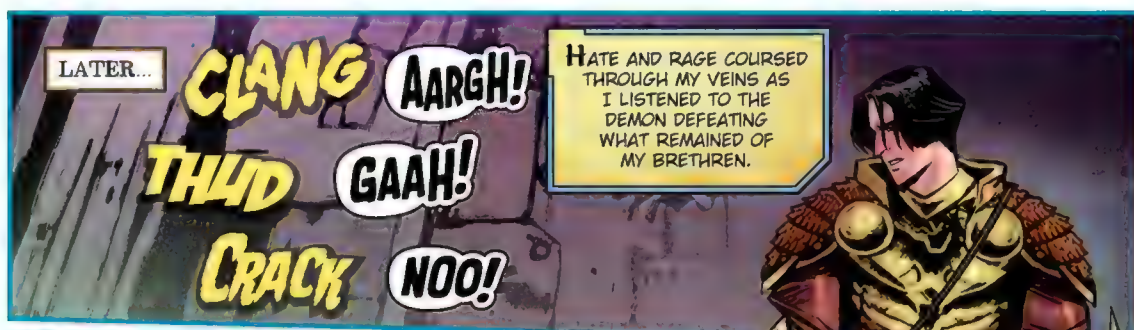


≡GASP≡



HURRY, BROTHERS... INTO THE STRONGHOLD!

WE SHALL AVENGE OUR FALLEN WITHIN THESE WALLS.





NO, THAT BEAST HAD ELUDED US FOR FAR TOO LONG. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A SHAME TO END HIM TOO QUICKLY.

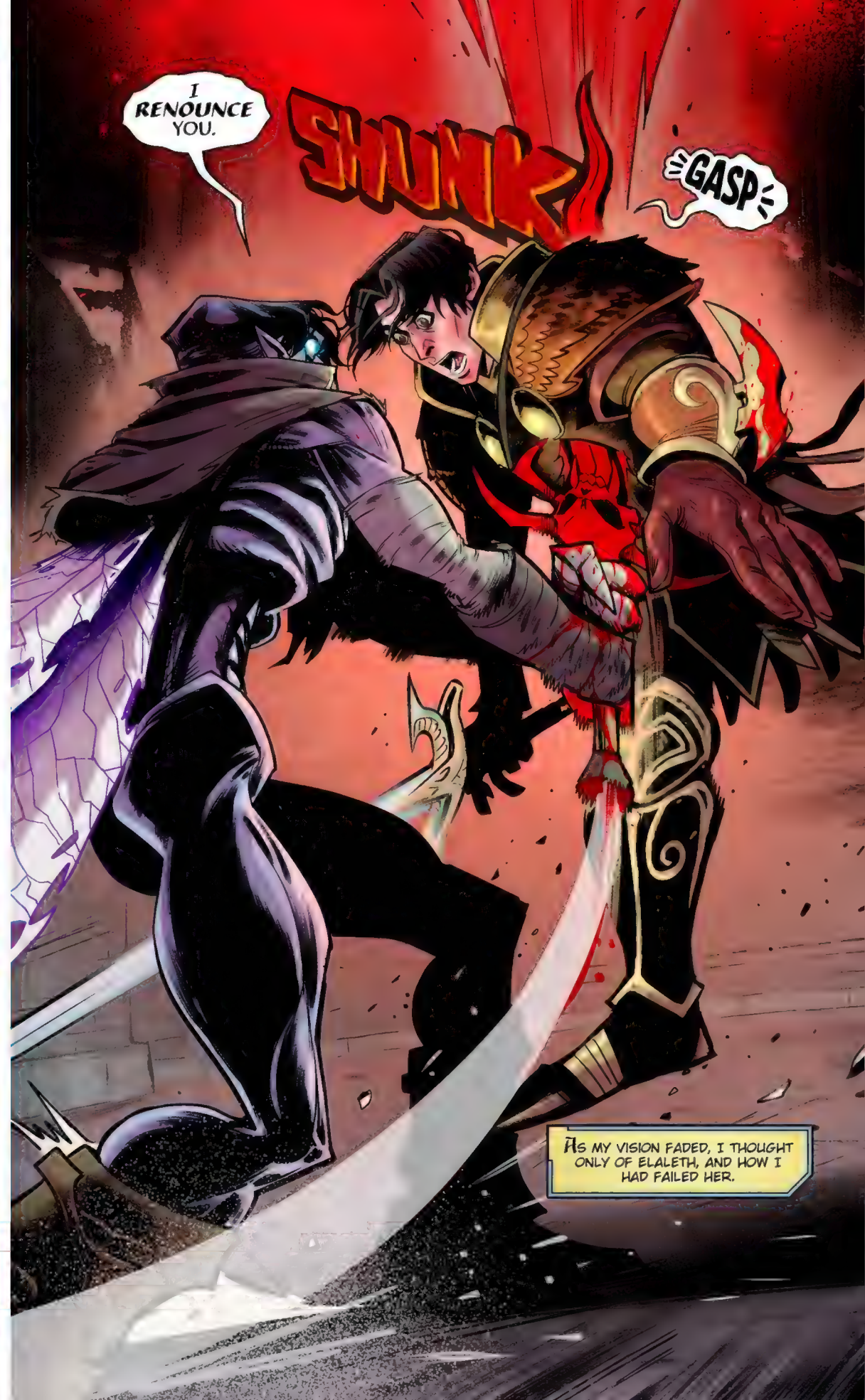


IT'S IRONIC REALLY, THE GREAT JANOS AUDRON TURNED OUT TO BE NO CHALLENGE AT ALL. THANKS TO YOU.

DID YOU HEAR HIS COWARDLY SCREAMS...



...WHEN I TORE THAT BLACK HEART OUT OF HIS CARCASS?

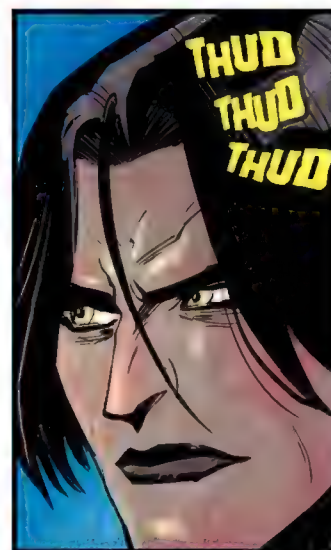


I RENOUNCE YOU.

SHUNK!

GASP!

As my vision faded, I thought only of Elaleth, and how I had failed her.





IT SEEMS
I DID TAKE THE
HEART OF JANOS
AUDRON.



DID THE AMULET HELP YOU
REMEMBER WHERE YOU
CONCEALED IT?

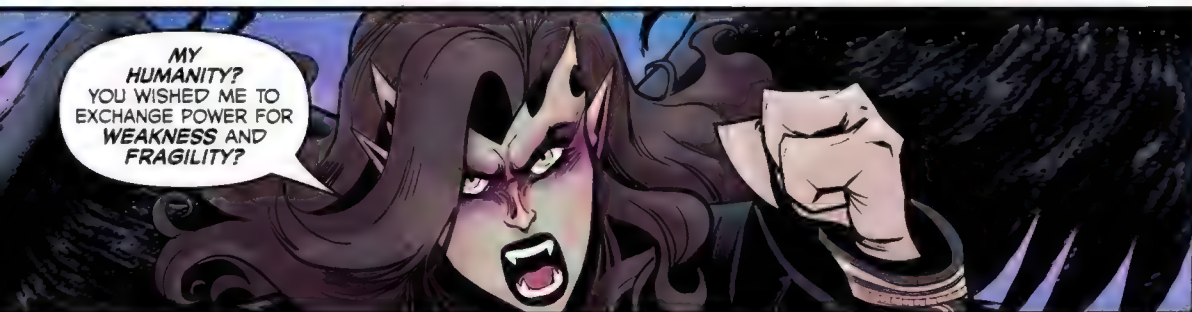
DO YOU
HAVE IT? IS
IT **HERE?**



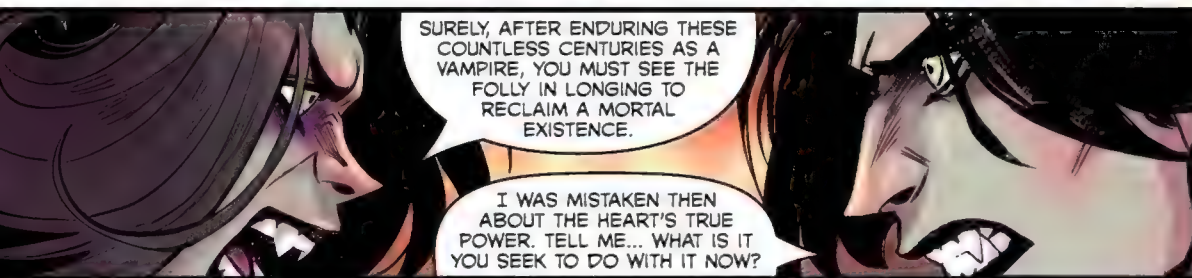
I REMEMBER MY HUMAN LIFE,
SISTER. AND MY HUMAN
DEATH.

IT IS TRUE
THAT I ONCE HELD
THE HEART IN MY HAND,
AND THAT I HAD HOPED
IT WOULD RESTORE YOUR
HUMANITY, OR GIVE YOUR
SOUL PEACE...

I WAS
MISTAKEN.

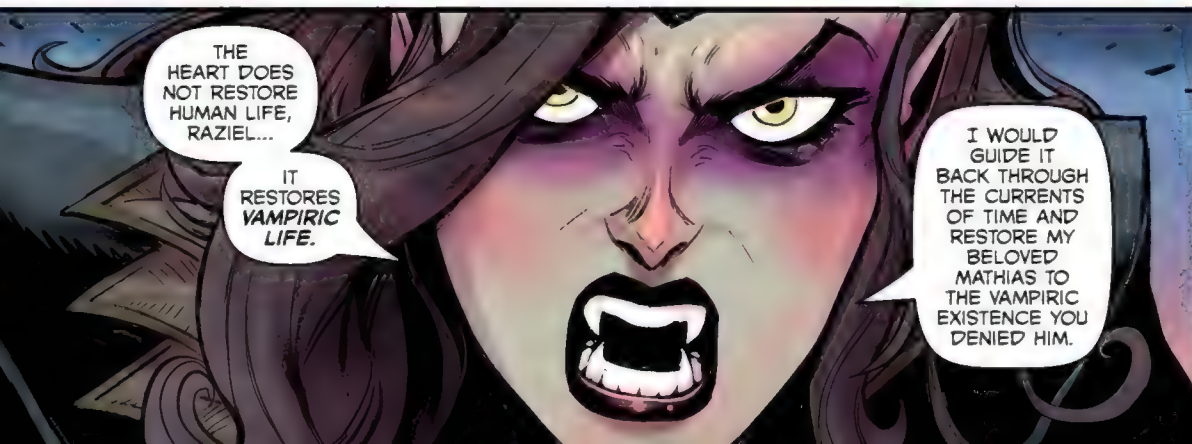


**MY
HUMANITY?**
YOU WISHED ME TO
EXCHANGE POWER FOR
**WEAKNESS AND
FRAGILITY?**



SURELY, AFTER ENDURING THESE
COUNTLESS CENTURIES AS A
VAMPIRE, YOU MUST SEE THE
FOLLY IN LONGING TO
RECLAIM A MORTAL
EXISTENCE.

I WAS MISTAKEN THEN
ABOUT THE HEART'S TRUE
POWER. TELL ME... WHAT IS IT
YOU SEEK TO DO WITH IT NOW?



THE
HEART DOES
NOT RESTORE
HUMAN LIFE,
RAZIEL...

IT
RESTORES
VAMPIRIC
LIFE.

I WOULD
GUIDE IT
BACK THROUGH
THE CURRENTS
OF TIME AND
RESTORE MY
BELOVED
MATHIAS TO
THE VAMPIRIC
EXISTENCE YOU
DENIED HIM.



THE
CURRENTS
OF TIME...

THE CURSE
MOEBIUS LAID
UPON YOU WAS THE
CONSEQUENCE
OF YOUR OWN
FOOLISHNESS.



I WAS NO FOOL...
I WAS **DAMNED**
TO HIS WILL!

HOW THEN
DID YOU
BREAK HIS
CURSE?

I DID
NOT **BREAK** IT.
I **ESCAPED**
IT.



"WHENEVER I TRIED TO LEAVE
KY'SET'SYK'S WOOD, AND TRY
I DID, AGAIN AND AGAIN,
WITHOUT **END!** I WAS TORN
AWAY, ONLY TO BE THRUST
INTO A DIFFERENT ERA."

"AT TIMES, I
LINGERED FOR DAYS.
AT OTHERS, MERE
FLEETING BREATHS
BEFORE THE MIST
RECLAIMED ME."

"THE PAST AND FUTURE
WERE AS ONE. EACH TIME
I THOUGHT ESCAPE WAS
POSSIBLE, MY EFFORTS
ONLY RETURNED ME TO THE
SAME PLACE... KY'S WOOD."

"THERE WAS NO
PATTERN, NO LOGIC TO
MOEBIUS'S DESIGN...
ONLY THE COLD HAND
OF HIS **MALICE.**"



"THEN ONE DAY, KY
REVEALED TO ME
THAT KAIN HAD
SLAIN MOEBIUS."

"MY HOPE OF
REUNITING WITH
MATHIAS, WITH MY
BELOVED, WAS
SHATTERED."



"COULD THIS
MEAN I WAS
FINALLY FREE
OF MOEBIUS'S
CURSE? YET...
WITHOUT
MATHIAS,
WHAT WAS
FREEDOM
WORTH?"



"KY WAS PLEASED MY CURSE WAS BROKEN. NOW I COULD FINALLY LEAVE HIS WOODS AND COMPLETE THE QUEST HE HAD LONG AGO MADE ME SWEAR TO ACCEPT."

"HE TOLD ME THAT EVEN THOUGH MOEBIUS NEVER SENT ME BACK TO THAT FATEFUL DAY IN THORN LACH... TO MATHIAS..."

"...THERE WAS ANOTHER WAY. AN EVENT THAT COULD FRACTURE TIME ITSELF."

"A PARADOX."



"KY PROFESSED TO KNOW LITTLE OF PARADOXES... LET ALONE HOW TO CREATE ONE."

"ALL HE KNEW, ALL HE GUESSED, HE GATHERED FROM THE WHISPERS OF HIS SPY..."

"...AND THE INFORMATION AMOUNTED TO THIS: ONLY KAIN AND YOU, THE MIGHTY RAZIEL, COULD FORGE A PARADOX."



ONCE AGAIN, I FOUND MYSELF FORCED TO BARGAIN WITH GREAT POWER.

KAIN?



KAIN.



YOU ASKED HIM FOR A PARADOX THAT COULD **SAVE** MATHIAS FROM MY SWORD...

BUT BEFORE YOU GO BACK TO THAT DAY IN THORN LACH, YOU REQUIRE THE HEART OF DARKNESS. FROM ME.



I NEED JANOS AUDRON'S HEART TO ENSURE HIS RESURRECTION.



I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU... I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS.

WHAT I DO KNOW IS THAT YOUR PRESENCE HERE HAS ONLY MADE MY EXISTENCE MORE ARDUOUS.

WERE YOU AWARE THAT KAIN SUMMONED ME TO HIS STRONGHOLD NOT LONG AFTER I RECEIVED THESE?



WHEN I TOLD HIM I HAD BEEN VISITED BY SOMEONE CLAIMING TO BE MY SISTER, HE BECAME **ENRAGED**.

HE COMMANDED ME TO KILL YOU.



KNOWING KAIN WANTS YOU DEAD, DO YOU IMAGINE HE STILL INTENDS TO HONOR HIS BARGAIN WITH YOU?

TELL ME, WHAT DID YOU OFFER IN RETURN? WHAT **MUST** YOU DO OR GIVE TO EARN HIS FAVOR?



YOU ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER.

CRACKLE

YET IF YOU DO NOT REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU, PERHAPS IT IS TIME THAT I SHOW YOU...

"THE PILLARS OF NOSGOTH, ONCE THE SACRED FOUNDATION OF THIS WORLD, LAY IN RUINS, RUBBLE BENEATH THE WEIGHT OF KAIN'S CHOICE TO REJECT FATE."

"INSTEAD OF SACRIFICING HIMSELF TO RESTORE BALANCE TO THE PILLARS, KAIN CHOSE TO RULE A WORLD IN DECAY."

LORD KAIN,
I SEEK AN
AUDIENCE.

NOT SINCE THE AGE OF JANOS AUDRON HAVE WINGED VAMPIRES WALKED THIS LAND. **STRANGE.** A REMNANT OF VORADOR'S CABAL, PERHAPS? MY CURIOSITY HAS GRANTED YOU A REPRIEVE FROM DEATH... FOR NOW. **APPROACH.**

HE DOES NOT
REMEMBER ME.'

I
HOPE
FOR A
FAVOR.

HE DOES NOT
REMEMBER THE **DEATH**
AND **DESTRUCTION** HE
SO LONG AGO VISITED
UPON MY VILLAGE.

A FAVOR? HOW **TEDIOUS.** I HAD
HOPED YOU WOULD CONTINUE
TO SURPRISE ME.

≡SIGH≡

FOR CENTURIES, I
HAVE SEARCHED FOR
THE UNATTAINABLE.

TO RECTIFY
A GRIEVOUS
OFFENSE IN
MY PAST.

THE
THREADS
OF FATE ARE
DELICATE.

MOEBIUS
THOUGHT HE COULD
STRING THEM TAUT AS
ACROSS A LUTE AND
IMPOSE HIS SONG ON
THEM. YET HE DIED BY
MY OWN HAND.

I HAVE
BEEN TOLD
THAT YOU TOO,
LORD KAIN, ARE
ALSO ABLE TO
MANIPULATE
TIME. I ASK--

RUMORS...
THE BLEATING OF
FOOLS. IRRELEVANT.
BUT YOUR WINGS,
THOSE WARRANT A
CLOSER LOOK...

I AM THE MOST POWERFUL
VAMPIRE IN EXISTENCE,
YET **NOT EVEN I**
HAVE WINGS.

I SHOULD
DESTROY YOU.
AND YET, YOUR PLEA
STIRS MY CURIOSITY...

WILL
YOU HELP
ME?

HELP YOU... OR **END YOU?** THAT, WE SHALL
SOON DISCOVER. YOU SEEK A PARADOX.
THAT IS NO SMALL MATTER. YET YOU SPEAK
AS THOUGH YOU UNDERSTAND THE DANGERS...
AS THOUGH YOU'VE HEARD THESE THINGS
BEFORE. PERHAPS **VORADOR** SENT YOU.
HE MUST HAVE TOLD YOU WHAT BEFELL HIM
THE FIRST TIME I DARED TO RESTITCH
TIME'S THREADS. ANSWER ME ONE
QUESTION AND I SHALL **CONSIDER**
YOUR REQUEST.

SPEAK YOUR
REQUEST.

TELL
ME, FROM
WHENCE DID
YOUR WINGS
ARISE?

I WILL TELL
YOU SOMETHING
FAR MORE
PRECIOUS...

SUCH
AS?

THE LOCATION
OF A TOMB WHERE
SIX SARAFAN
INQUISITORS LIE.

WHAT USE
TO ME ARE
DUST AND
BONES?

NO, LORD KAIN. RESURRECT THEM. HARNESS THE
STRENGTH THEY POSSESSED IN LIFE AND SHAPE THEM
TO YOUR WILL. YOUR NEW LIEUTENANTS WAIT TO SHIRK
OFF WRETCHED DEATH, THEIR LUNGS RENEWED AND
REPURPOSED BY YOUR GENEROUS BREATH.

SHOW
YOUR ENEMIES
THAT EVEN THE
MIGHTIEST SARAFAN
WARRIORS TO HAVE
EVER LIVED ARE
SUBJECT TO YOUR
DOMINION.



AN INTRIGUING VISION. PERHAPS I WILL PURSUE IT. HOW GREAT THIS OFFENSE MUST BE TO IMPEL YOU TO SUCH LENGTHS. WHAT *SIN* LIES IN YOUR PAST?

WHY SHOULD I TROUBLE MYSELF WITH YOUR NEED FOR ATONEMENT?

IT IS NOT ATONEMENT I SEEK. IT IS *REVENGE*.

REVENGE! A WORTHY GRAIL. DO YOU SEEK TO *DRINK DEEP?*

I SEEK ONLY THAT WHICH WAS STOLEN FROM ME.

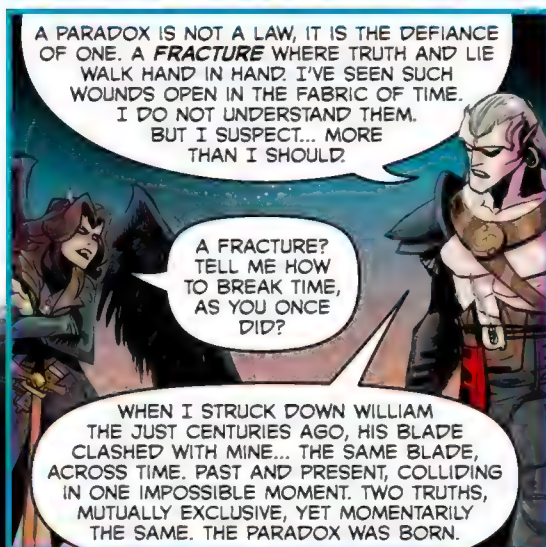


INTRIGUING... TELL ME THEN, WHERE IS THIS TOMB?

I WILL TELL YOU, BUT YOU MUST FULFILL YOUR END OF THIS BARGAIN.

A PARADOX IS NOT SOMETHING I CAN SIMPLY *TELL YOU*. A PARADOX MUST BE SHOWN. IT MUST BE LIVED.

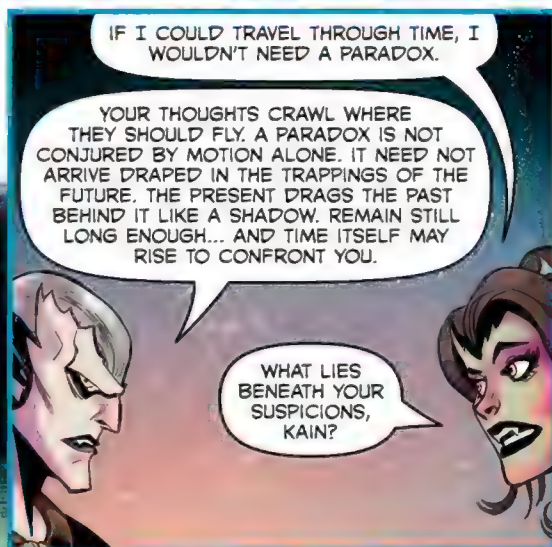
THEN LET ME LIVE IT!



A PARADOX IS NOT A LAW, IT IS THE DEFIANCE OF ONE. A *FRACTURE* WHERE TRUTH AND LIE WALK HAND IN HAND. I'VE SEEN SUCH WOUNDS OPEN IN THE FABRIC OF TIME. I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEM. BUT I SUSPECT... MORE THAN I SHOULD.

A FRACTURE? TELL ME HOW TO BREAK TIME, AS YOU ONCE DID?

WHEN I STRUCK DOWN WILLIAM THE JUST CENTURIES AGO, HIS BLADE CLASHED WITH MINE... THE SAME BLADE, ACROSS TIME, PAST AND PRESENT, COLLIDING IN ONE IMPOSSIBLE MOMENT. TWO TRUTHS, MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE, YET MOMENTARILY THE SAME. THE PARADOX WAS BORN.



IF I COULD TRAVEL THROUGH TIME, I WOULDN'T NEED A PARADOX.

YOUR THOUGHTS CRAWL WHERE THEY SHOULD FLY. A PARADOX IS NOT CONJURED BY MOTION ALONE. IT NEED NOT ARRIVE DRAPED IN THE TRAPPINGS OF THE FUTURE. THE PRESENT DRAGS THE PAST BEHIND IT LIKE A SHADOW. REMAIN STILL LONG ENOUGH... AND TIME ITSELF MAY RISE TO CONFRONT YOU.

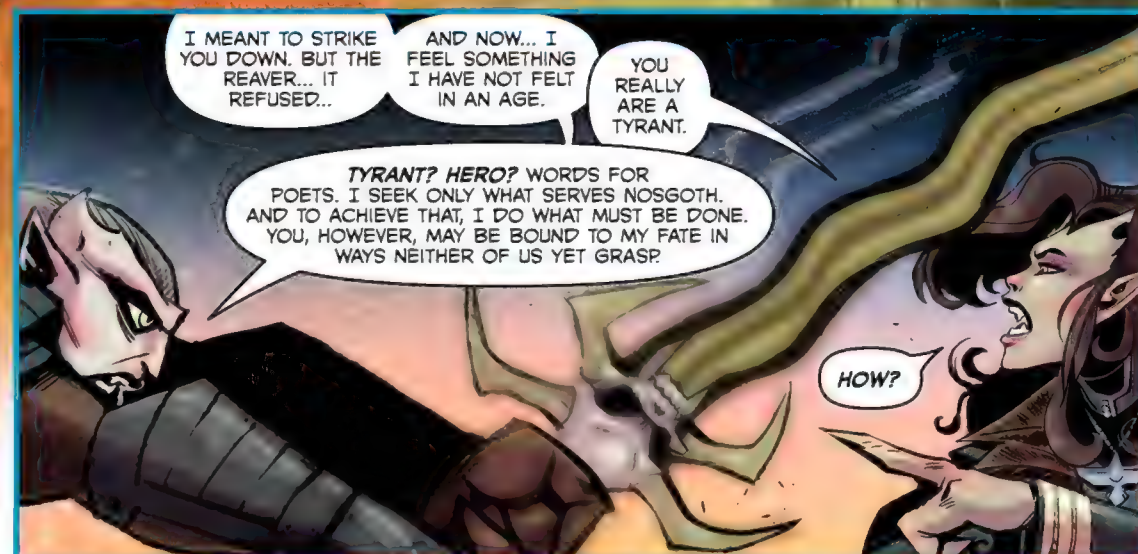
WHAT LIES BENEATH YOUR SUSPICIONS, KAIN?



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!



...CURIOUS...



I MEANT TO STRIKE YOU DOWN, BUT THE REAVER... IT REFUSED...

AND NOW... I FEEL SOMETHING I HAVE NOT FELT IN AN AGE.

YOU REALLY ARE A TYRANT.

TYRANT? HERO? WORDS FOR POETS. I SEEK ONLY WHAT SERVES NOSGOTH. AND TO ACHIEVE THAT, I DO WHAT MUST BE DONE. YOU, HOWEVER, MAY BE BOUND TO MY FATE IN WAYS NEITHER OF US YET GRASP

HOW?

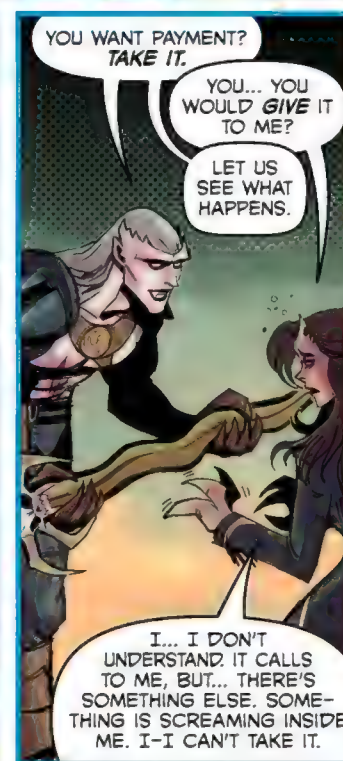


WHEN WILLIAM'S BLADE TOUCHED MINE, TIME BUCKLED. THE REAVER SCREAMED. BUT NOT TO ME. IT HOWLED ACROSS THE AGES. I HEAR IT AGAIN, NOW. LIKE THE LAST BREATH BEFORE A STORM.

BUT THERE IS NO OTHER REAVER HERE. NOT EVEN A SHARD.

NO. NOT EVEN A SHARD.

THEN THIS BARGAIN IS HOLLOW. I HAVE ENDURED YOUR POSTURING, YOUR RIDDLES... AND ALL I RECEIVE IS AN ATTEMPTED EXECUTION AND VAGUE RIDDLES? I'VE EARNED MORE THAN THIS.



YOU WANT PAYMENT? TAKE IT.

YOU... YOU WOULD *GIVE IT* TO ME?

LET US SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND. IT CALLS TO ME, BUT... THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE. SOMETHING IS SCREAMING INSIDE ME. I-I CAN'T TAKE IT.



FASCINATING.

YOU'VE SEEN MORE TONIGHT THAN MOST GLIMPSE IN A LIFETIME. AND YET, THE SHAPE OF IT ALL STILL ELUDES YOU. I WILL SHOW YOU MORE, BUT FIRST, THE TOMB...



VERY WELL. IT IS HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT. SURELY YOU HAVE SEEN IT, YET YOU DEEMED THE INTERRED DEAD OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE AND DID NOT EXPLORE. TO FIND IT, JOURNEY WEST, TOWARD THE LAKE OF TEARS...

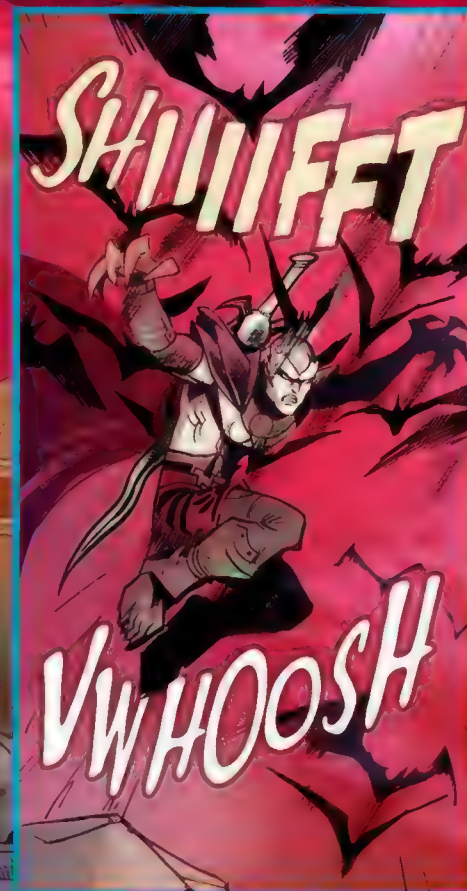


NOW, BROTHER, PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO WHAT THE AMULET WILL SHOW YOU. IT IS NOT EVERYONE WHO GETS TO WITNESS THEIR OWN **BIRTH**.

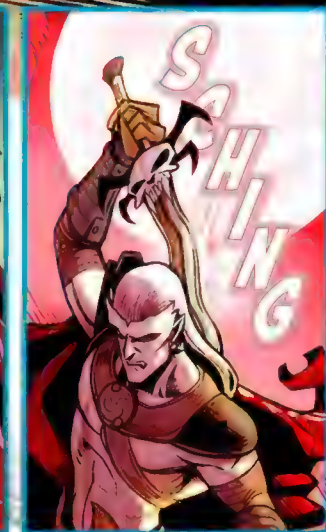


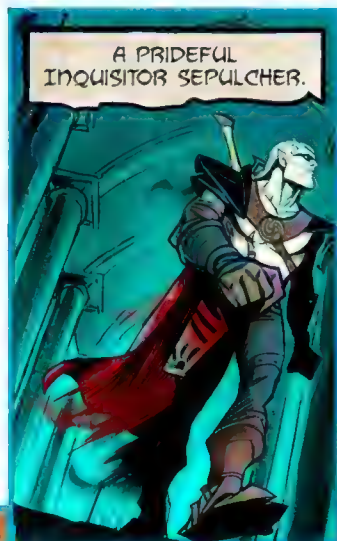
"WITHIN THE CANYONS, CUT INTO THE WALLS OF THE CLIFFS, YOU'LL FIND THE **SEPULCHER**."

"VENTURE FORTH AT THE HOUR OF VEILS. WHEN THE NIGHT IS AT ITS **DARKEST**, HARNESS YOUR **UMBRAL SIGHT** TO UNVEIL A PATH UNSEEN BY MORTAL EYES."



"FROM HERE, THE TRAIL IS MOST EASILY FOLLOWED FROM A GREAT HEIGHT."





A PRIDEFUL
INQUISITOR SEPULCHER.



THEY
INSCRIBE
THEIR
ARROGANCE
IN STONE.



I SHALL ENJOY
DESECRATING THIS
HALLOWED PLACE.



HERE SLEEP
THEIR MIGHTIEST
CHAMPIONS.



THEY HAVE
RESTED
LONG
ENOUGH.



RAHAB.



SCRAATCH
DUNN



TUREL



SKRRRTCH
RAZIEL

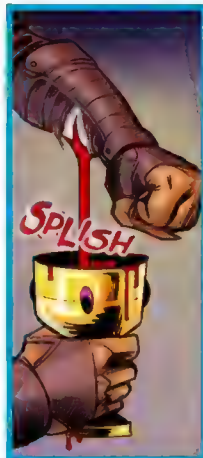


RAZIEL...

JANOS AUDRON'S
GREATEST MORTAL
FOE SHALL RESURRECT
AS MY MOST
DEVOTED LIEUTENANT.



GRRROAN



MY BLOOD, SUFFUSED
WITH **ANCIENT POWER...**



...AWAKENS THE DEAD AND
BINDS THEM TO MY WILL.

I RESURRECT
YOU WITH THIS
VAMPIRIC GIFT
AND BAPTIZE YOU
IN THE ESSENCE
OF MY VERY
SOUL.



SNAP

GASP

RISE,
RAZIEL, MY
FIRSTBORN.

**RISE
AND
SERVE.**



DRINK.



I
IMBUE
YOU WITH
RENEWED
PURPOSE,
RAZIEL.

TOGETHER,
WITH YOUR
BRETHREN, WE
SHALL BEND
NOSGOTH TO
OUR WILL.



I'VE WALKED THIS WORLD FOR A MILLENNIA. WHY COME TO ME NOW WHEN *YOU* WERE THERE FROM THE BEGINNING?

BY THE TICKING OF MORTAL CLOCKS, THE ENDLESSNESS OF MOEBIUS'S TIME-PRISON CAST ME BETWEEN THE SHATTERED EPOCHS OF NOSGOTH FOR MILLENNIA. EVEN AFTER I *TORE FREE* AND FOUND KAIN, HE GAVE ME *NOTHING*. SO I TURNED TO KY, SEEKING ANOTHER PATH THAT MIGHT DRIVE KAIN TOWARD A PARADOX. BUT KY'S WOODS DO NOT OBEY THE RULES OF TIME.

IT DOES NOT MATTER. EVERYTHING I AM OR WAS... BROTHER, SARAFAN, VAMPIRE... *DERIVES FROM YOU.*

FROM KAIN! HE ATTACKED OUR VILLAGE. HE *RESURRECTED* YOU. YES, KAIN, WHO YOU HAVE SERVED FOR A THOUSAND YEARS WITH *MINDLESS DEVOTION!*

LIKE A HOUND ON A LEASH, YOU *GROVELED* FOR SCRAPS UNDER YOUR MASTER'S TABLE.

BLIND TO THE TRUTH OF HIS AMBITION. *BLIND* TO THE TRUTH OF *YOUR OWN PAST.*



YOU TRADED MY *BODY AND SOUL* TO KAIN IN SERVICE OF YOUR *OWN AMBITION!*

YOUR OWN DESIRES!

CRAACK



WHY DID KAIN HIDE FROM ME THE TRUTH OF WHO I WAS?



FROM THE MOMENT YOU STRUCK MATHIAS'S HEAD FROM HIS BODY TO THE MOMENT YOU TORE THE HEART FROM JANOS AUDRON'S CHEST...

YOU WERE ALWAYS AN EXECUTIONER...



...AND YOU ARE AN EXECUTIONER *STILL.*

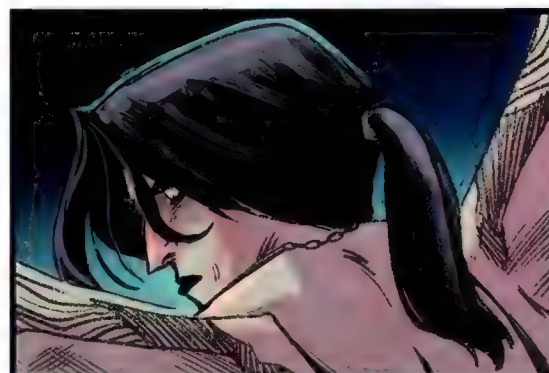
THAT IS ALL THAT MATTERED TO KAIN WHEN HE RAISED YOU FROM DEATH, AND IT IS ALL THAT MATTERS TO HIM *NOW.*



YOU REVEL IN YOUR VAMPIRIC GIFT! IF YOU WERE GIVEN THAT CHOICE NOW, WOULD YOU *REFUSE* IT?

WOULD YOU RATHER YOU WERE BONES AND DUST, UNDISTURBED IN A SILENT TOMB?

YOU WOULD NOT!



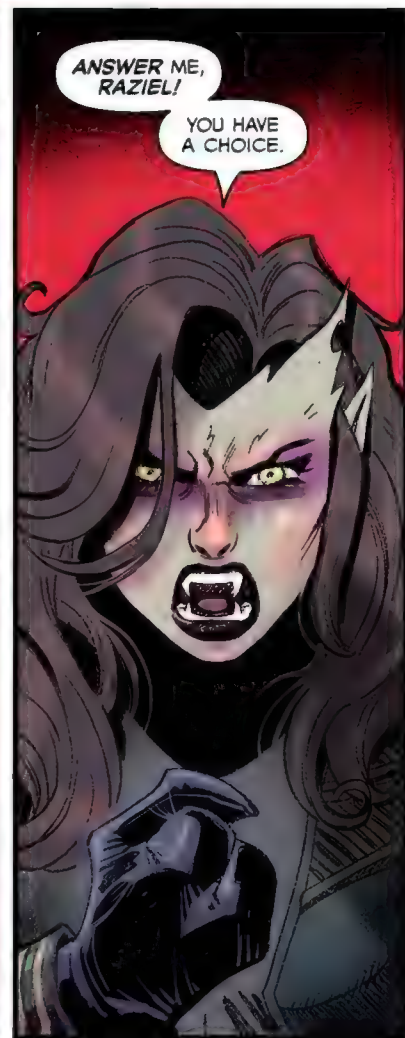
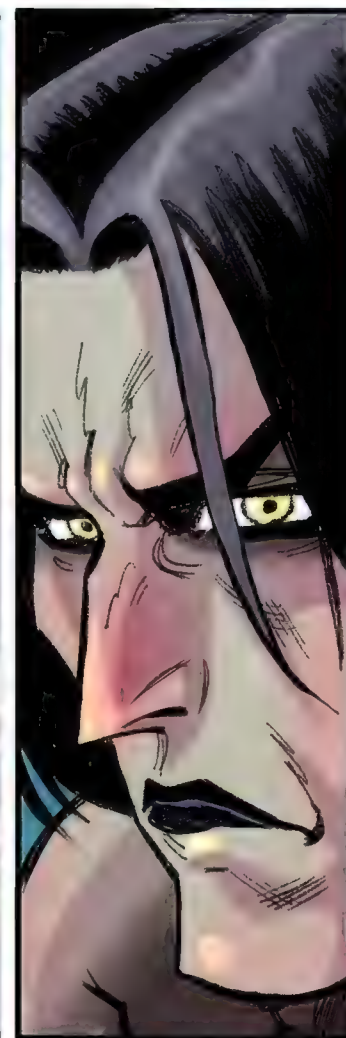
OR CONSIDER THIS.



WHEN AT LAST I AM GRANTED MY PARADOX... WHEN AT LAST I STAND ONCE AGAIN IN THORN LACH...

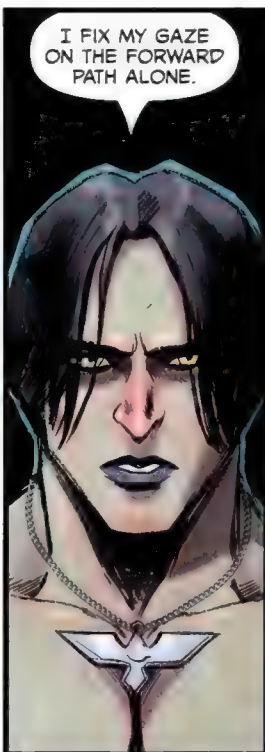
SHALL I SAVE YOU AS WELL? SHALL I CREATE A WORLD IN WHICH YOU WERE NEVER SARAFAN? NEVER VAMPIRE? NEVER KAIN'S PUPPET?

NEVER AN EXECUTIONER?

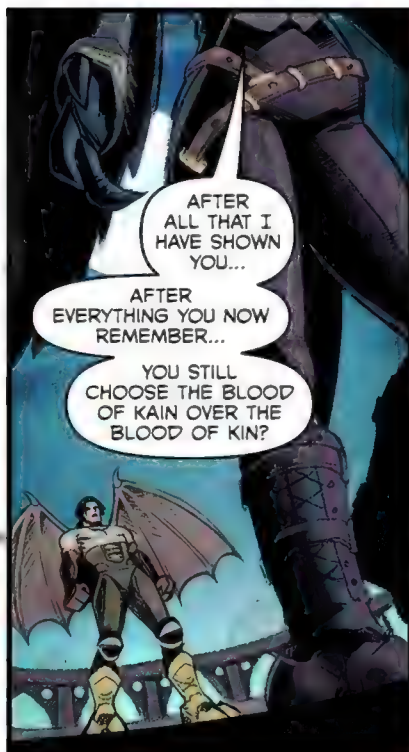


ANSWER ME, RAZIEL!

YOU HAVE A CHOICE.



I FIX MY GAZE
ON THE FORWARD
PATH ALONE.



AFTER
ALL THAT I
HAVE SHOWN
YOU...

AFTER
EVERYTHING YOU NOW
REMEMBER...

YOU STILL
CHOOSE THE BLOOD
OF KAIN OVER THE
BLOOD OF KIN?

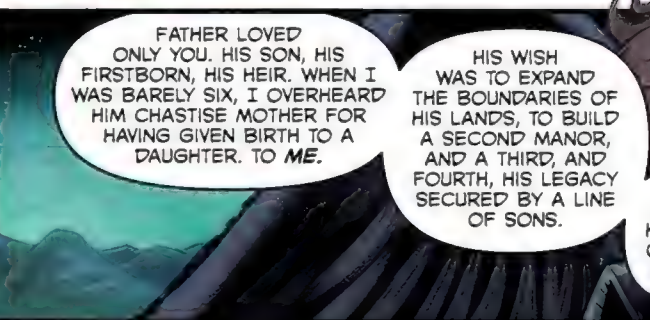


JOIN ME, SISTER, IN SERVICE TO
KAIN. NOW THAT YOU HAVE ESCAPED
MOEBIUS'S CURSE, YOU ALSO
HAVE A CHOICE.

KAIN WOULD
WELCOME YOUR ALLEGIANCE.
WE WOULD SHARE COMMON
PURPOSE. YOUR LONESOMENESS
MIGHT FIND A BALM.



AND YOU?
WHAT HARDSHIP DID
YOU *ENDURE*?



FATHER LOVED
ONLY YOU. HIS SON, HIS
FIRSTBORN, HIS HEIR. WHEN I
WAS BARELY SIX, I OVERHEARD
HIM CHASTISE MOTHER FOR
HAVING GIVEN BIRTH TO A
DAUGHTER. TO *ME*.

HIS WISH
WAS TO EXPAND
THE BOUNDARIES OF
HIS LANDS, TO BUILD
A SECOND MANOR,
AND A THIRD, AND
FOURTH, HIS LEGACY
SECURED BY A LINE
OF SONS.

OF
COURSE,
HE NEVER
GOT THAT
CHANCE.



I WAS AN
ENCUMBRANCE.

I STAYED
CLOSE TO YOU,
RAZIEL. I CLUNG
TO YOUR SHADOW
BECAUSE YOU WERE
KIND TO ME.

BECAUSE I
LOVED YOU.



WITH OUR
MIGHTY WINGS,
THE HEAVENS
THEMSELVES WILL
BEND TO OUR
WILL.



AND WE WOULD BEND
TO KAIN'S!

HAVE YOU
FORGOTTEN THAT
IT WAS KAIN WHO
SLAUGHTERED
OUR PARENTS?



YET IT IS
ONLY MATHIAS
WHOSE LIFE YOU
WISH TO SAVE.

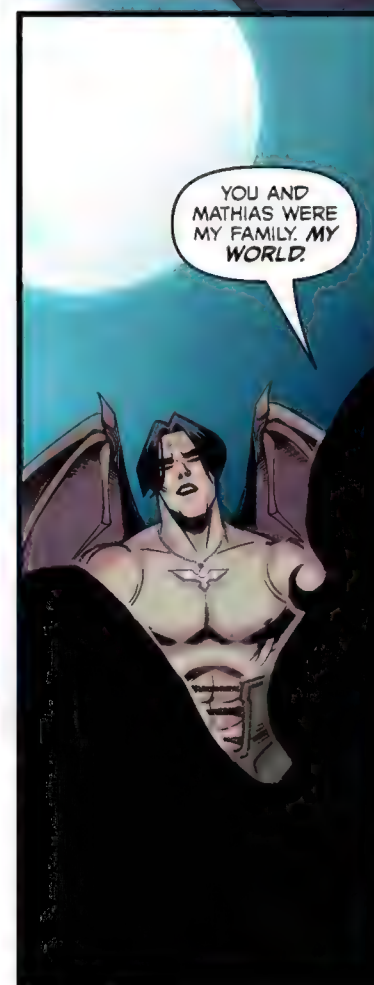
WHAT
OF OUR
MOTHER AND
FATHER?



YOUR CHILDHOOD, BROTHER, WAS
SIMPLE. EVERYONE IN THE MANOR,
IN THE ENTIRE FORSAKEN VILLAGE,
EXISTED TO ENSURE THAT YOUNG
LORD RAZIEL OF THORN LACH
WAS CONTENT.

THAT HE
WANTED FOR
NOTHING.

YOU WITNESSED
NO HARDSHIP AS A CHILD...
NOT EVEN THAT OF THOSE
CLOSEST TO YOU.



YOU AND
MATHIAS WERE
MY FAMILY. *MY*
WORLD.



THEN
YOU TOOK
HIM FROM
ME...

AND I
SAW YOU FOR
WHAT YOU REALLY
WERE. IN THE
MOMENT, WITH ONE
STROKE OF YOUR
SWORD...

I
LOST YOU
BOTH.



ELAETH... I... I AM SORRY.



I DO NOT KNOW WHERE THE HEART OF DARKNESS LIES. THEREFORE, YOU CANNOT COMPLETE YOUR QUEST.

STAY HERE. WITH ME.



HAVE YOU LISTENED TO NOTHING I HAVE SAID?

I DO NOT FORGIVE YOU, RAZIEL.

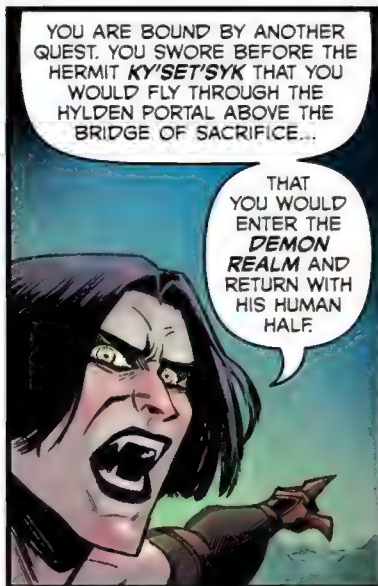
EVEN WITHOUT THE HEART, I MUST GO BACK. BY WHATEVER MEANS, I WILL SAVE MATHIAS.



BUT YOUR WINGS...



WHAT OF THEM?



YOU ARE BOUND BY ANOTHER QUEST. YOU SWORE BEFORE THE HERMIT KY'SET'SYK THAT YOU WOULD FLY THROUGH THE HYLDEN PORTAL ABOVE THE BRIDGE OF SACRIFICE...

THAT YOU WOULD ENTER THE DEMON REALM AND RETURN WITH HIS HUMAN HALF.



ONCE I LEAVE THIS WOOD, WHO'S TO FORCE ME TO DO WHAT YOU ASK?

YOU WILL LEARN THAT HYLDEN MAGIC IS A MAGIC OF CONSEQUENCES.

WOULD YOU RATHER LIVE OUT YOUR EXISTENCE LOST IN MY WOODS, OR WOULD YOU RATHER KEEP THE ETERNAL COMPANY OF MY HUMAN HALF IN THE DEMON REALM, KNOWING THE WAY BACK WOULD BE CLOSED TO YOU FOREVER?



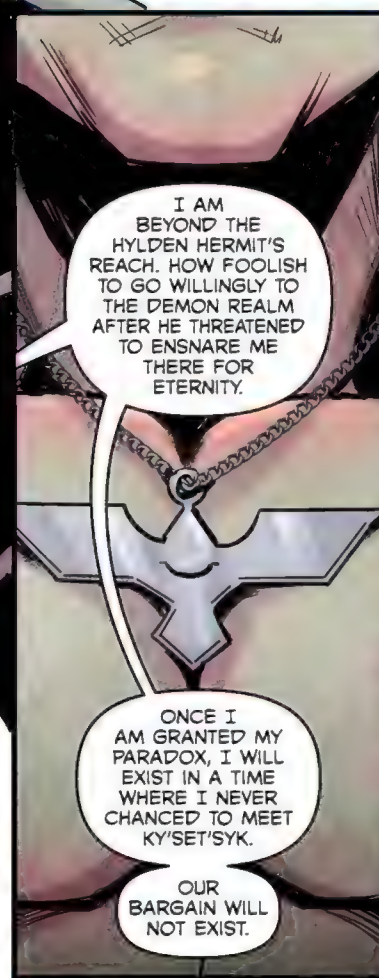
"I ESCAPED THE CURSE OF MOEBIUS..."



"I ESCAPED THE STREAM OF TIME..."



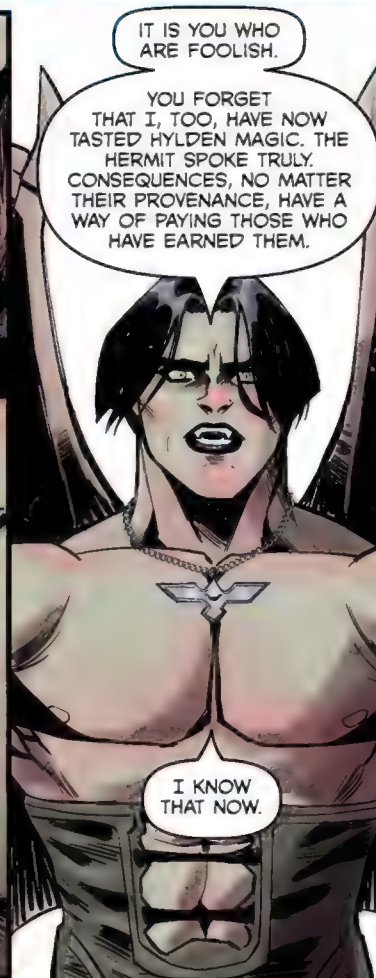
"AND I ESCAPED KY'SET'SYK'S WOOD."



I AM BEYOND THE HYLDEN HERMIT'S REACH. HOW FOOLISH TO GO WILLINGLY TO THE DEMON REALM AFTER HE THREATENED TO ENSNARE ME THERE FOR ETERNITY.

ONCE I AM GRANTED MY PARADOX, I WILL EXIST IN A TIME WHERE I NEVER CHANCED TO MEET KY'SET'SYK.

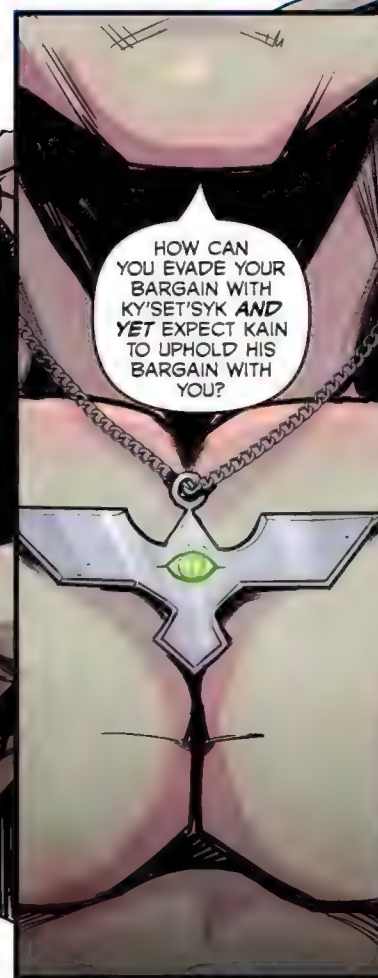
OUR BARGAIN WILL NOT EXIST.



IT IS YOU WHO ARE FOOLISH.

YOU FORGET THAT I, TOO, HAVE NOW TASTED HYLDEN MAGIC. THE HERMIT SPOKE TRULY. CONSEQUENCES, NO MATTER THEIR PROVENANCE, HAVE A WAY OF PAYING THOSE WHO HAVE EARNED THEM.

I KNOW THAT NOW.



HOW CAN YOU EVADE YOUR BARGAIN WITH KY'SET'SYK AND YET EXPECT KAIN TO UPHOLD HIS BARGAIN WITH YOU?

I HAVE DONE ONLY WHAT WAS NECESSARY TO RESHAPE MY PAST.

NEITHER MY CHOICES NOR MY CONSEQUENCES ARE YOUR CONCERN.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED, SISTER, THAT PERHAPS YOU ARE THE REASON KAIN **DESTROYED THORNLACH?** THAT YOU ARE THE REASON SO MANY INNOCENTS PERISHED THAT DAY BY THE SWORDS AND FANGS OF VAMPIRES?

"TIME IS BOTH WICKED AND INDIFFERENT. IT TUMBLES YOU ONE INSTANT LIKE A LEAF IN A GALE AND ENTOMBS YOU THE NEXT LIKE A SPIDER IN AMBER."

THAT IS WHAT YOU TOLD ME.

IS IT NOT POSSIBLE THAT KAIN CAME TO OUR VILLAGE THAT DAY FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN TO CREATE YOUR PARADOX?

PERHAPS TIME ALSO FLOWS IN A CIRCLE, AND YOUR DESIRE TO CHANGE THE PAST IS THE VERY THING THAT INCITED THE TRAGEDY YOU WISH TO CHANGE.

MIGHT TIME NOT ALSO BE A COILED SERPENT THAT DEVOURS ITS OWN TAIL?

EVEN IF TIME WERE TO SPIRAL BACK UPON ITSELF, YOU, RAZIEL, WOULD REMAIN AT ITS CENTER.

IT WAS **ALWAYS YOU** AT THE CENTER.

BOTH KAIN AND MOEBIUS MANIPULATED YOUR DESTINY FROM THE **BEGINNING.**

EACH HAD HIS OWN MOTIVE FOR LEADING YOU INTO THE SERVICE OF THE SARAFAN.

AND HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?

YOU ARE THE VERY REASON I WAS **CURSED** BY MOEBIUS! HE FEARED YOU WOULD ABANDON THE PATH HE SET FOR YOU, **HAD YOU KNOWN I STILL LIVED.**

EVERY MISFORTUNE IN MY LIFE, RAZIEL...

...IS BECAUSE **OF YOU!**

I DO NOT WISH TO--

SLASH

KRAHH!

WYTHOCSH#



CLANG

YEAAARRGH!

THUD

AGH!

SWISH

SHANK

GAAH!

I DID NOT WISH FOR THINGS TO END THIS WAY.

THEN CHOOSE A DIFFERENT PATH. I'VE SHOWN YOU--

I HAVE SEEN ONLY WHAT THE ARTIFACT HAS REVEALED, AND YOU ASK ME TO ACCEPT IT AS AN ARTICLE OF FAITH.

YET STILL YOU TRUST KAIN.

IS IT NOT CURIOUS? THE FIRST TIME YOU LAY EYES ON ME, A VAMPIRE WITH WINGS, AND NOW YOU POSSESS WINGS OF YOUR OWN. THEY ARE NO COINCIDENCE... NO MERE GIFT.

IF YOU ARE THE CAUSE OF THEIR MANIFESTATION, THEN THEY ARE NOT A GIFT, BUT A SCOURGE.

NO, RAZIEL. YOUR WINGS ARE A GIFT. I COUNSELED YOU NOT LONG AGO TO KEEP THEM A SECRET FROM YOUR MASTER. I SPOKE OUT OF ENVY.

IMAGINE WHAT HEIGHTS KAIN WILL RAISE YOU TO IF YOU REVEAL THEM TO HIM. SURELY, HE WILL INVITE YOU TO RULE BESIDE HIM...

I KNEW THAT KAIN WOULD VENERATE YOU. I KNEW BY THE WAY HE FIRST BEHELD MY WINGS... WITH REVERENCE AND RESPECT.

I KNEW THAT IF HE SAW YOUR WINGS, HIS REGARD FOR YOU WOULD EXCEED ALL LIMIT.

AND I GREW EMBITTERED.

YOU HAVE BESTED ME, RAZIEL. I HAVE NO REASON TO LIE TO YOU.

SHOW HIM, RAZIEL. SHOW KAIN WHAT YOU HAVE BECOME!

LATER...

I HAVE BESTED MY SISTER IN COMBAT.

YET WHY DO I FEAR THAT, EVEN NOW, SHE IS DEFEATING ME?

THE SANCTUARY OF CLANS... SEAT OF MY LORD'S POWER. KAIN, THE BEAT OF MY ZEALOUS HEART HERALDS MY COMING. MAKE READY TO RECEIVE YOUR MOST DEVOUT SON.

FOR CENTURIES, WE HAVE BEEN SPECTERS IN EACH OTHER'S WAKE, SHIFTING BETWEEN THE SEEN AND THE UNSEEN, BOUND BY THE TIDE OF FATE.

THUMP

KRAA

WATCH CLOSELY, FLIGHTED BROTHER.

BUT NOW, THE SHROUD OF TIME IS SLUNDERED, AND WE STAND EXPOSED IN THIS SINGULAR RECKONING.

THIS RELIC HAS LET ME GAZE UPON MY PAST.

IF ONLY IT COULD NOW AFFORD ME EVEN A SECOND OF FORESIGHT.

ELAETH HAS REVERSED HER COUNSEL.

WHAT GROUND DOES SHE STAND TO GAIN IF I CONTINUE TO HIDE MY WINGS...

...OR LOSE IF I CHOOSE TO REVEAL THEM?

SCHEME FOLLOWS SCHEME, UNTIL ALL IS TWISTED AND CONFUSED. BUT STILL I CHART A STRAIGHT COURSE...

KAIN WILL SEE MY WINGS.

HOW COULD HE SEE ME AS ANYTHING BUT A WORTHY ALLY?

I AM RAZIEL, FIRST-BORN OF HIS LIEUTENANTS.

I STOOD WITH KAIN AND MY BRETHREN AT THE DAWN OF THE EMPIRE.

I HAVE SERVED HIM A MILLENNIUM.

CHANGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN INEVITABLE.

OVER TIME, WE BECAME LESS HUMAN AND MORE... DIVINE.

KAIN WOULD ENTER HIS OWN STATE OF CHANGE AND EMERGE WITH A NEW GIFT.

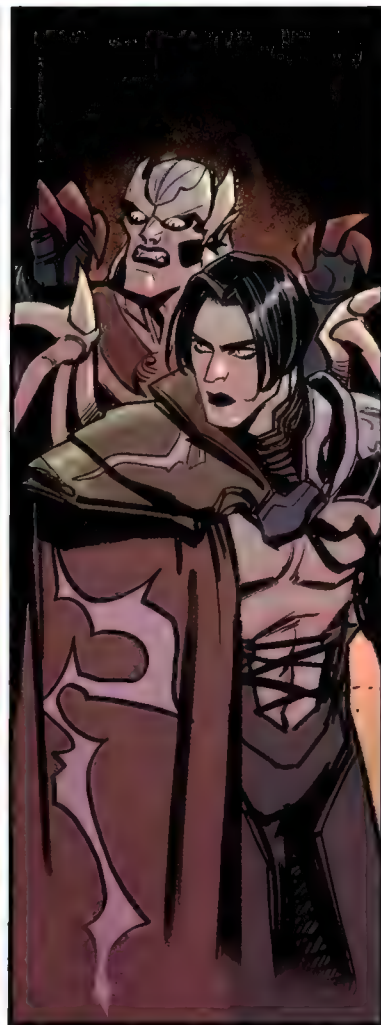
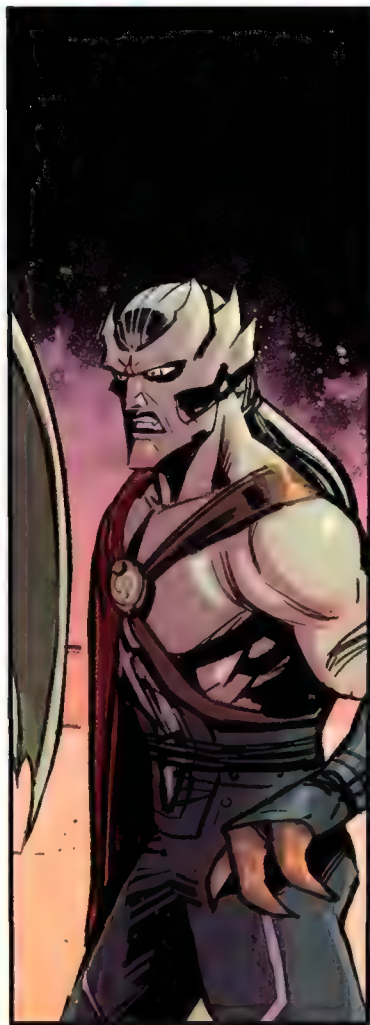
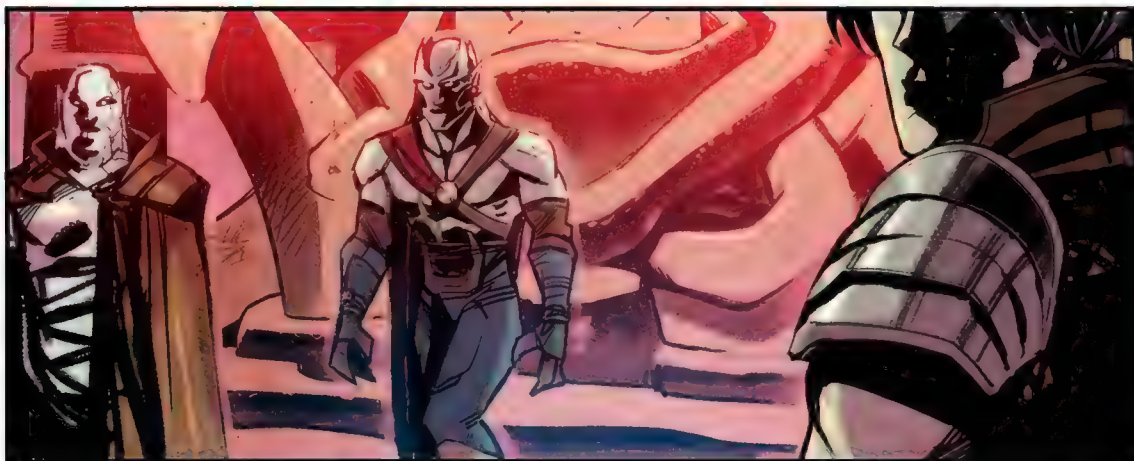
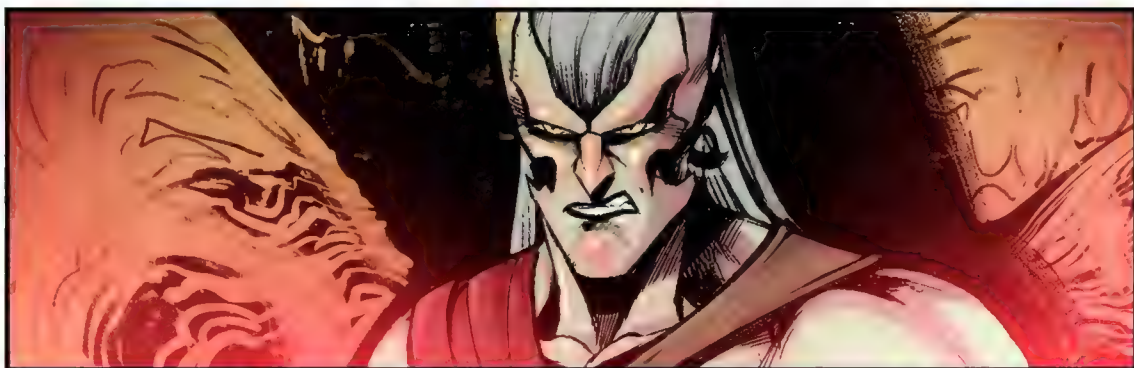
SOME YEARS AFTER THE MASTER, OUR EVOLUTION WOULD FOLLOW.

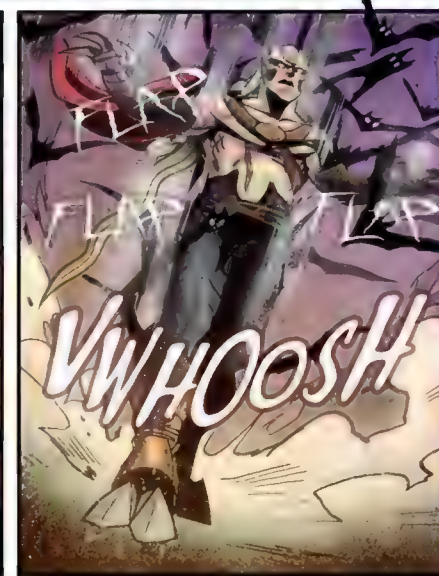
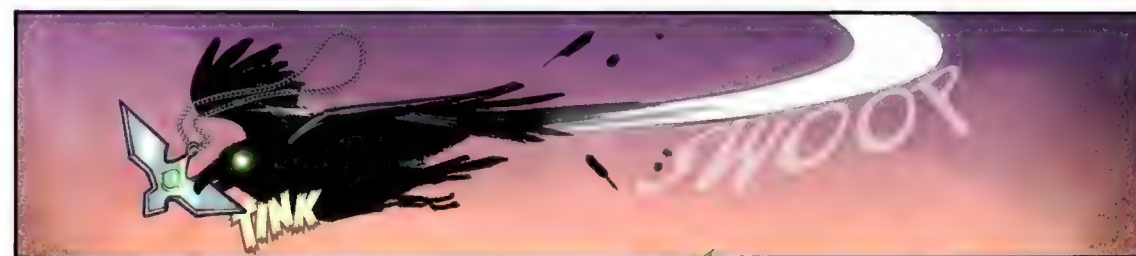
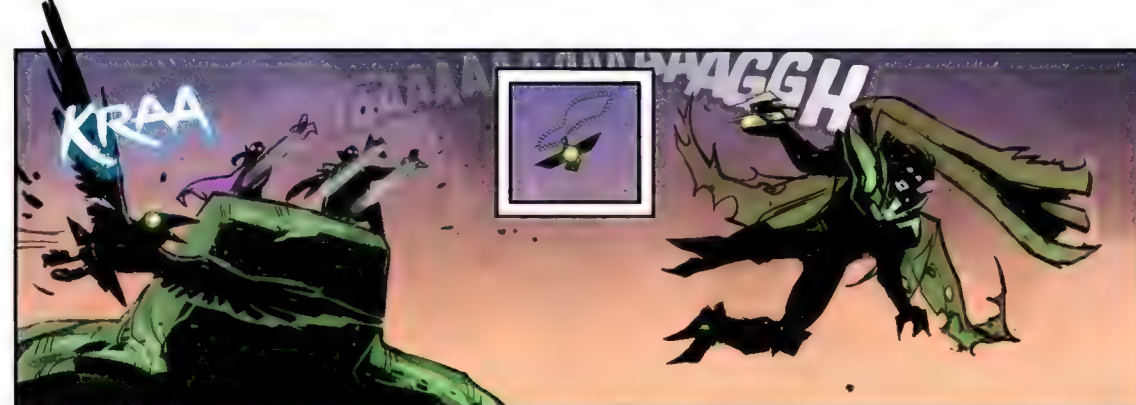
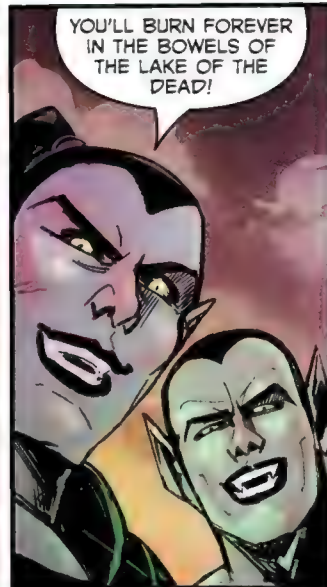
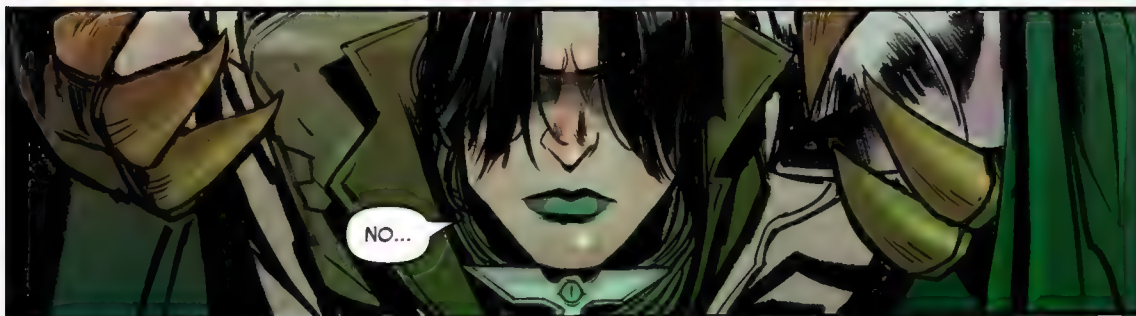
KAIN KNOWS THE DEPTHS OF MY LOYALTY.

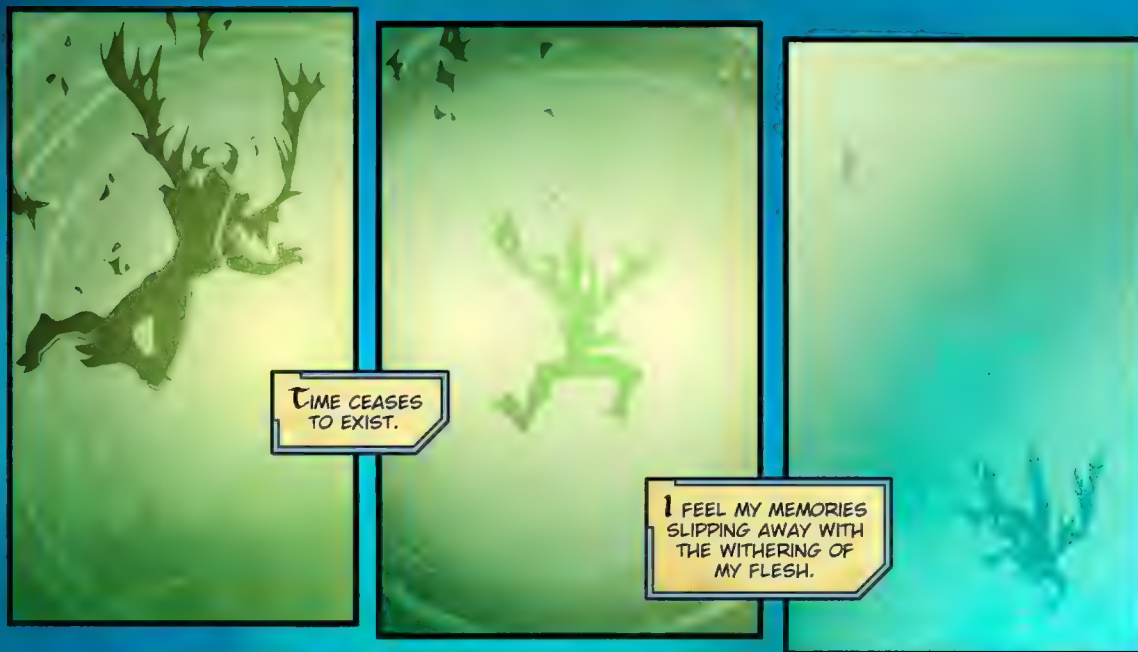
MY TRANSFORMATION IS A TESTAMENT TO HIS DARK GIFT. THIS IS WHAT HE SHAPED ME TO BECOME.

I OFFER MY BECOMING, MY EVOLUTION...

...IN SERVICE TO MY MASTER.







TIME CEASES
TO EXIST.

I FEEL MY MEMORIES
SLIPPING AWAY WITH
THE WITHERING OF
MY FLESH.

CENTURIES
LATER...

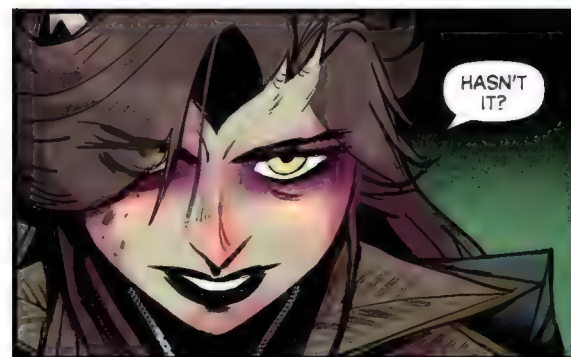
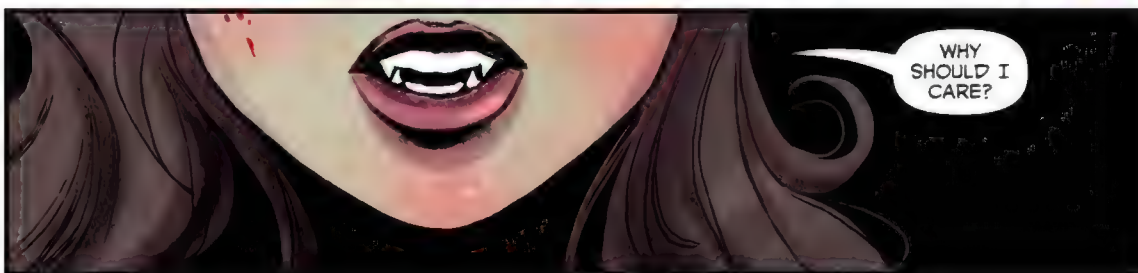
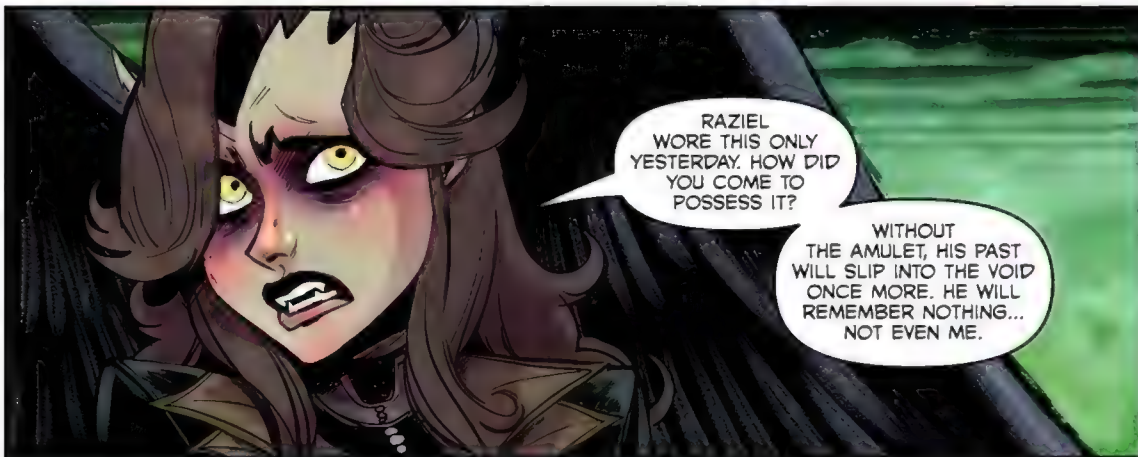


ONLY THIS
TORTURE
REMAINS.



THE ABYSS
STIRS...

RAZIEL,
YOU ARE
WORTHY...





MY AMULET.
I GAVE IT TO
RAZIEL.

I KNOW
NOTHING OF
IT, LADY
ELALETH.

I'VE COME
TO DISCUSS OUR
BARGAIN. TELL ME, HOW
MUCH TIME HAS PASSED
SINCE WE LAST SPOKE
OF IT?

BUT THEN, TIME
MEANS SOMETHING QUITE
DIFFERENT TO ONE CURSED
BY MOEBIUS.

YOU'VE YET TO
THANK ME FOR KILLING THE
TIME GUARDIAN. YOU OWE
YOUR FREEDOM TO ME.



WHAT DID
YOU DO TO
RAZIEL?



THE BRIDGE OF
SACRIFICE. HOW
APPROPRIATE.

THERE ARE
TIMES WHEN SACRIFICE IS
NECESSARY. WHEN ONE LIFE MUST
BE GIVEN TO MAKE POSSIBLE...
ANOTHER LIFE.



GIVEN?

OR
TAKEN?

IRONIC THAT
YOU WERE NOT
WILLING TO SACRIFICE
YOURSELF TO SAVE
ALL OF NOSGOTH!

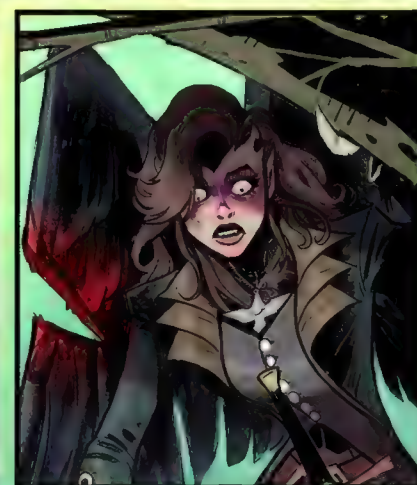
TELL ME
WHAT YOU
DID!



ONLY
WHAT YOU
KNEW I
WOULD DO.
I HAVE
DELIVERED
YOU THE
VENGEANCE
YOU WERE
TOO WEAK
TO TAKE
YOURSELF.

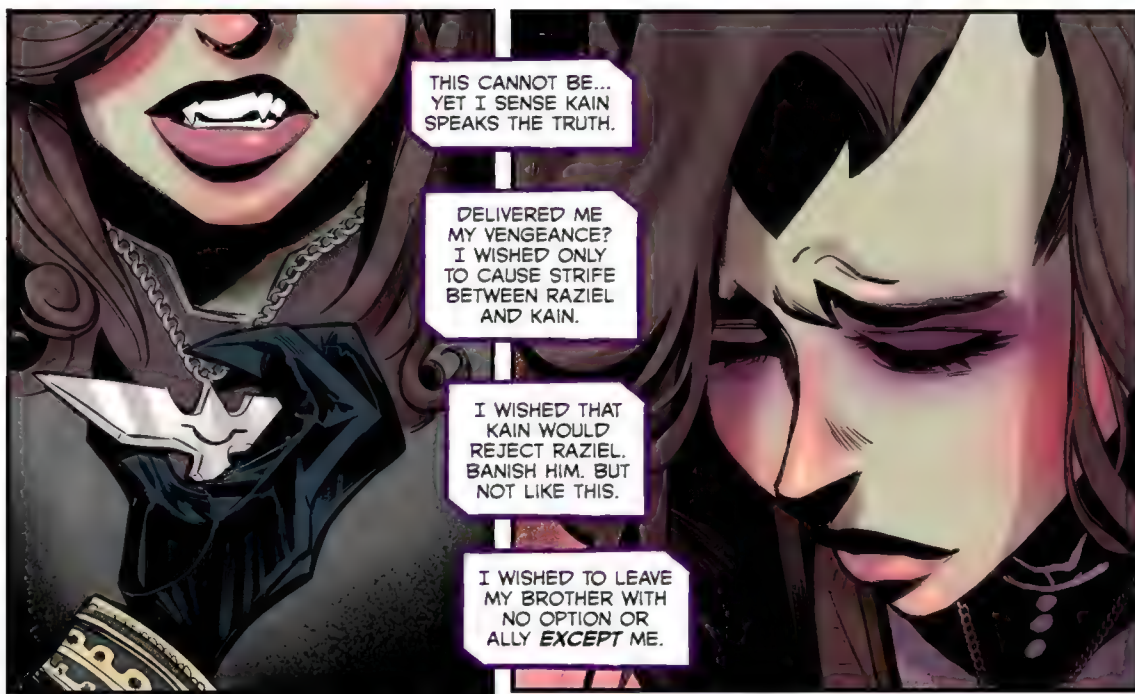


AND FOR THE ADDED
INSOLENCE OF HIS
WINGS, I HAD HIM CAST
DOWN INTO THE LAKE
OF THE DEAD!



THAT WAS THE
PATH HE WAS **DESTINED**
TO TREAD. THE BURDEN HE
WAS FATED TO BEAR TO
PRESERVE OUR KIND.

IN TIME, **ALL**
WILL UNDERSTAND

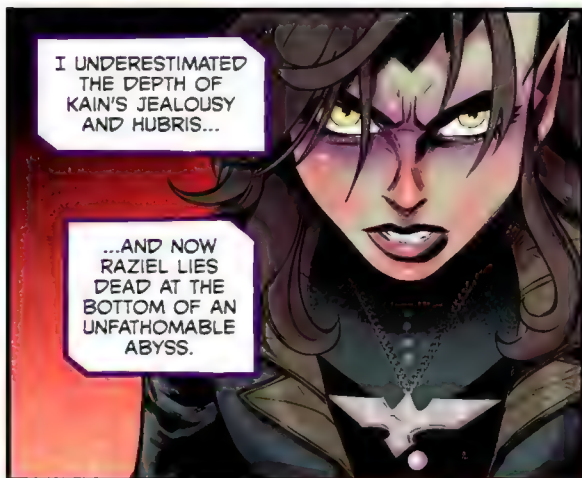


THIS CANNOT BE...
YET I SENSE KAIN
SPEAKS THE TRUTH.

DELIVERED ME
MY VENGEANCE?
I WISHED ONLY
TO CAUSE STRIFE
BETWEEN RAZIEL
AND KAIN.

I WISHED THAT
KAIN WOULD
REJECT RAZIEL.
BANISH HIM. BUT
NOT LIKE THIS.

I WISHED TO LEAVE
MY BROTHER WITH
NO OPTION OR
ALLY *EXCEPT* ME.



I UNDERESTIMATED
THE DEPTH OF
KAIN'S JEALOUSY
AND HUBRIS...

...AND NOW
RAZIEL LIES
DEAD AT THE
BOTTOM OF AN
UNFATHOMABLE
ABYSS.



RAZIEL NEVER DELIVERED THE ONE
THING YOU NEEDED. YOU NEVER
PROCURED THE HEART OF
DARKNESS.

HOW DO YOU KNOW?
PERHAPS I POSSESS IT NOW!



RAZIEL TOLD YOU THE TRUTH. HE
NEVER KNEW THE LOCATION OF
JANOS AUDRON'S HEART.

NOW,
DO YOU
STILL WISH
TO ALTER
YOUR PAST,
LADY OF
THORNLACH?
OR IS THAT
TOO LIKE
VENGEANCE...
SOMETHING
YOU'RE TOO
WEAK TO
PURSUE
ON YOUR
OWN?



ENOUGH
OF YOUR PRATTLE,
KAIN. I WILL SHOW
YOU *WEAKNESS!*



YOU WOULD
WAR AGAINST
ME, CHILD?



SUCH
FIRE. PITY
RAZIEL'S
LAST BREATH
LACKED THE
SAME
RESOLVE.

RRARGH!



DOES HIS
SOUL WHISPER
TO YOU NOW, LADY
ELAETH? DOES HE CURSE
MY NAME... OR YOURS?



YOU
KEPT A SECRET
FROM ME, LADY.
WHEN YOU FIRST
SOUGHT MY HELP
AT THE NINE
PILLARS.

WHAT
SECRET?

THAT
YOU ARE
BOUND TO
RAZIEL BY
BLOOD. THAT
YOU ARE HIS
SISTER.

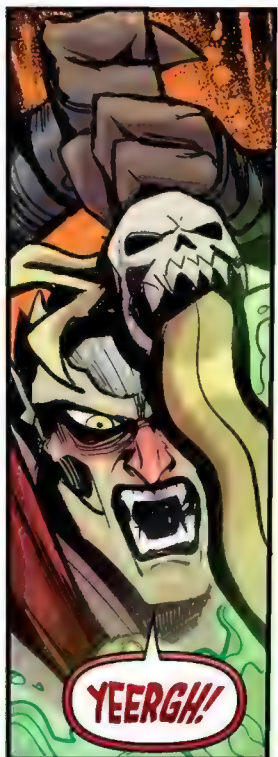
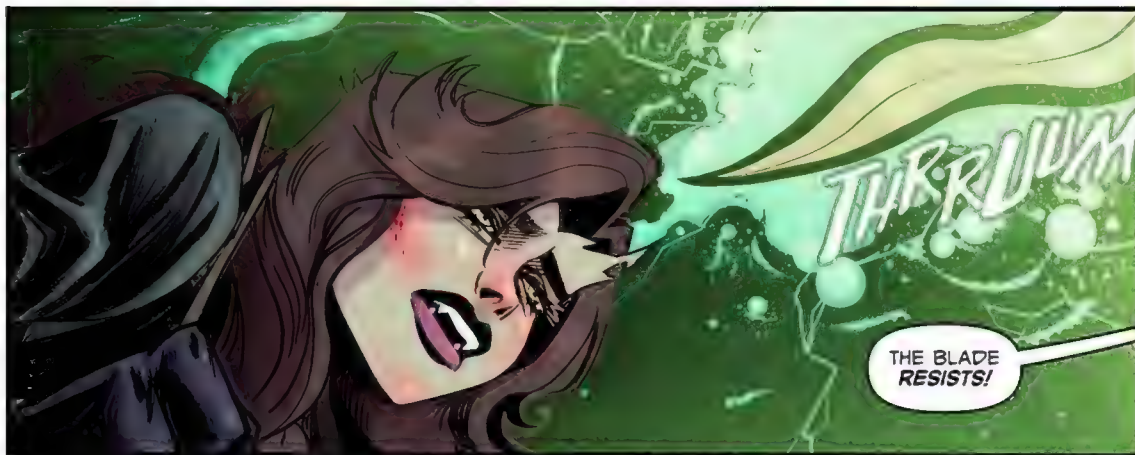
WHAT
DOES
OUR KINSHIP
MEAN TO
YOU?

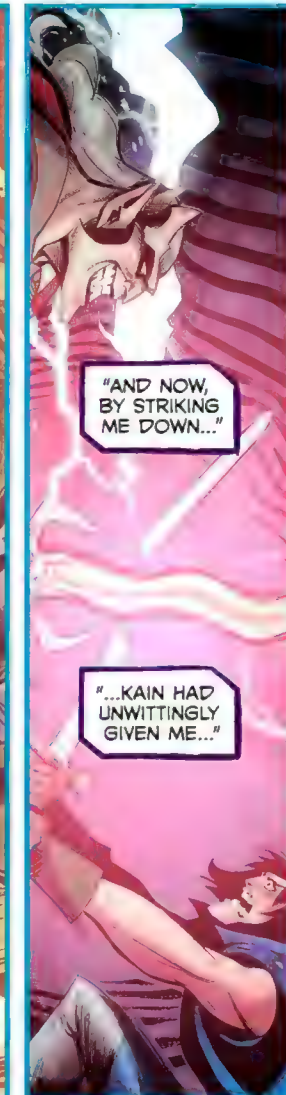
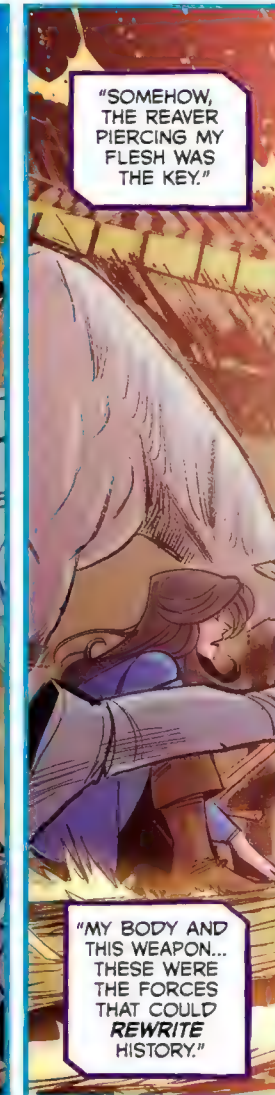
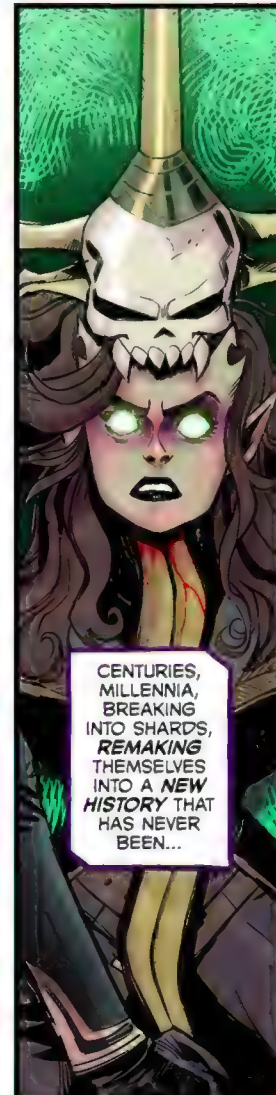
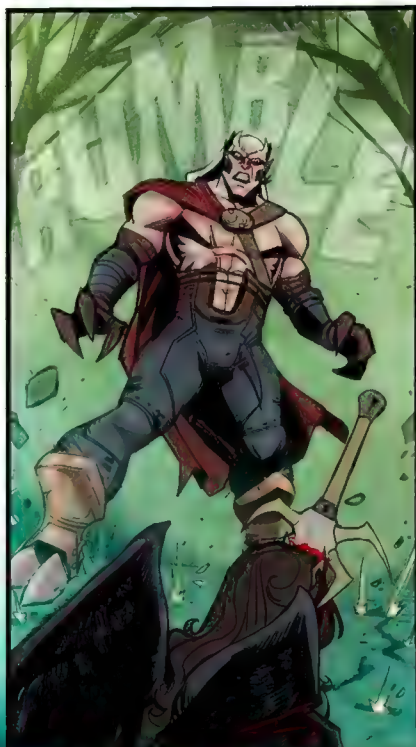


PERHAPS
NOTHING.

PERHAPS
EVERYTHING.

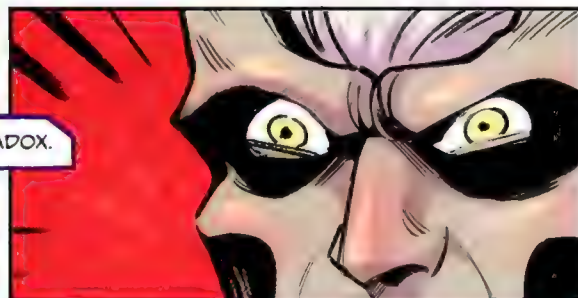








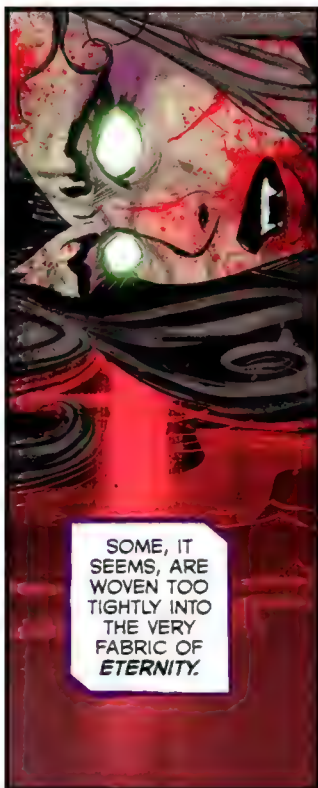
...A PARADOX.



THE WARP OF TIME AND WEFT OF FATE WEAVE A NEW TAPESTRY.



YET SOME THREADS CANNOT BE UNDONE.

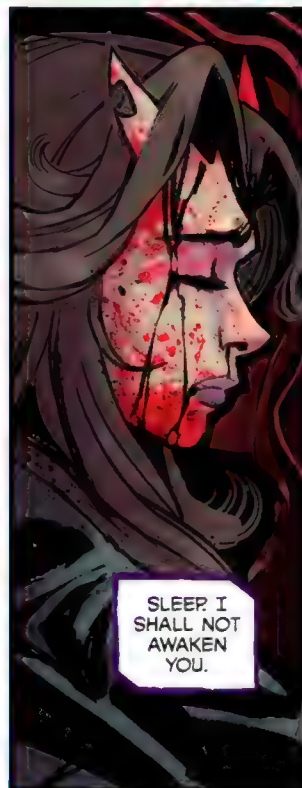


SOME, IT SEEMS, ARE WOVEN TOO TIGHTLY INTO THE VERY FABRIC OF ETERNITY.



"MATHIAS... MY BELOVED..."

"I COULD NOT SAVE YOU."



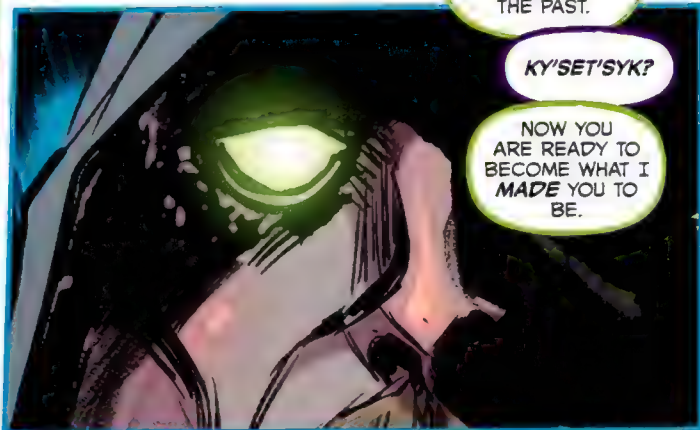
SLEEP I SHALL NOT AWAKEN YOU.



RAZIEL, I AM SORRY.



AT LAST, YOU HAVE ABANDONED YOUR SENSELESS PURSUIT OF THE PAST.



KY'SET'SYK?

NOW YOU ARE READY TO BECOME WHAT I MADE YOU TO BE.



HOW CAN THIS BE?

KAIN STILL WANTS TO BE RID OF YOU. WHETHER YOU LIVE IN A DIFFERENT TIME OR DIE IN THIS ONE, HE IS GRANTED HIS WISH.

WHAT DO YOU GLEAN FROM THAT KNOWLEDGE?



THAT... THAT
I WAS A THREAT
TO HIM.

TO HIS
EMPIRE.

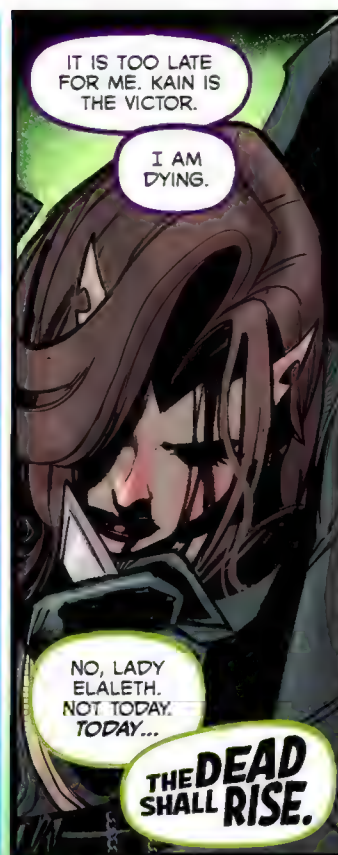


NOT
WAS.

ARE.

RAZIEL'S FATE REMAINS
UNFINISHED. THERE IS MORE
HE IS DESTINED TO DO.

AND IT IS IN
KAIN'S INTEREST, WHATEVER
HIS REASONS, TO KEEP YOU
AND YOUR BROTHER
APART.



IT IS TOO LATE
FOR ME. KAIN IS
THE VICTOR.

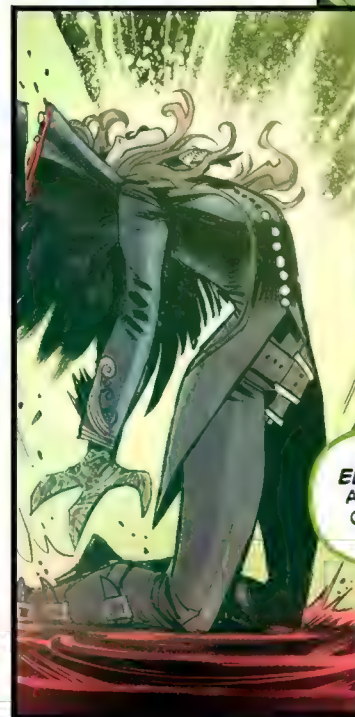
I AM
DYING.

NO, LADY
ELAETH.
NOT TODAY.
TODAY...

**THE DEAD
SHALL RISE.**



WHAT
BLASPHEMY
IS THIS?



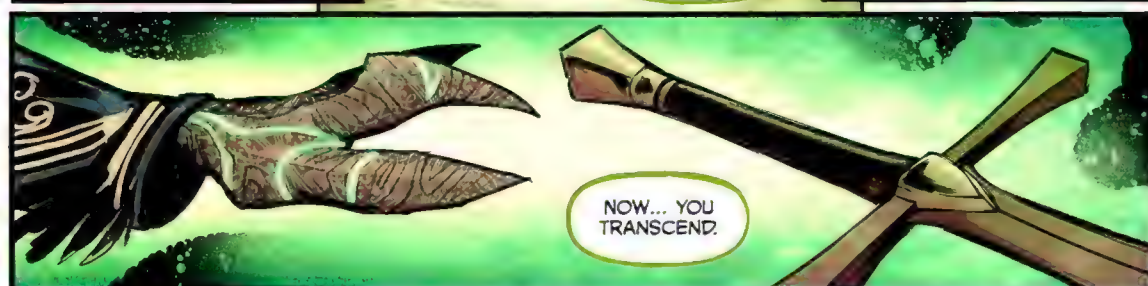
RISE,
ELAETH. YOU
ARE A CHILD
OF HYLDEN
MAGIC.



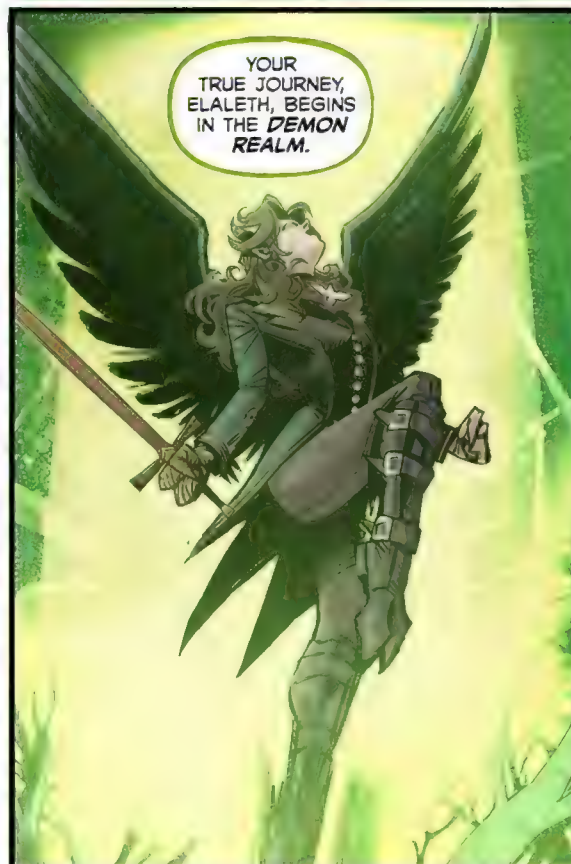
I HAVE WAITED
PATIENTLY WHILE
YOU SOUGHT
VENGEANCE.



HYLDEN
SORCERY?
HOW IS THIS
POSSIBLE?



NOW... YOU
TRANSCEND.



YOUR
TRUE JOURNEY,
ELAETH, BEGINS
IN THE *DEMON*
REALM.





YOU! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



THIS IS BUT THE BEGINNING, CHILD.



I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN WITH YOU, LADY OF THORNLACH.

IT IS BECAUSE OF YOU THAT I--

HAVE BECOME A FORCE UNMATCHED, MY MASTER'S GREATEST CHAMPION.



YOUR MASTER?

KY'SET'SYK.

KY IS YOUR MASTER?

YES, HE SET ME TO WATCH OVER YOU FROM THE TIME YOU WERE BUT A CHILD. I HAVE BEEN WITH YOU, THROUGH ALL THINGS.



THE WHITE-FEATHERED RAVEN...



NOW, YOU MUST TREAD WHERE I CANNOT FOLLOW. I AM BOUND TO KY, AND AS SUCH, I AM BARRED FROM THE DEMON REALM.

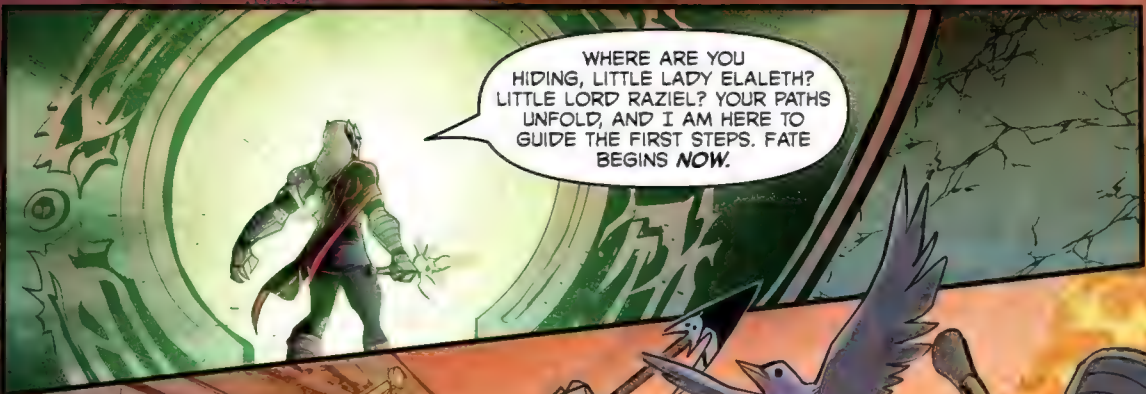
GO, AND FULFILL YOUR VOW. TAKE THE AMULET. KY'SET'SYK WILL LEAD YOU THROUGH THE TRIALS TO COME.



FIND MY HUMAN HALF, AS YOU SWORE TO LONG AGO, AND ONCE I AM FULLY RESTORED...



YOUR TRUE DESTINY SHALL BE REVEALED.



WHERE ARE YOU
HIDING, LITTLE LADY ELAETH?
LITTLE LORD RAZIEL? YOUR PATHS
UNFOLD, AND I AM HERE TO
GUIDE THE FIRST STEPS. FATE
BEGINS NOW.

DESTINY LOOPS
AGAIN, FOR THE
FIRST TIME.

END

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